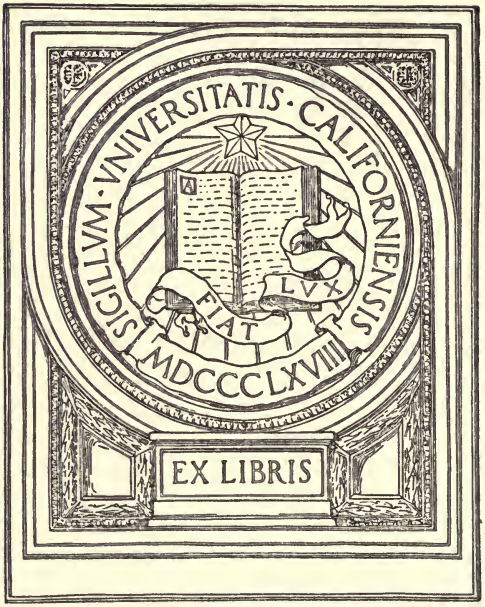
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Margaret Collett
1829

THE

CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

VOL. III.

In the Press.

THE COUNTRY CURATE.

A SERIES OF TALES,

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE SUBALTERN, AND CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

THE

CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE SUBALTERN."

He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named!
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day.—KING HENRY V.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

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SARATOGA.

(CONTINUED.)

SARATOGA.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the mean while, rumour after rumour, touching the state of affairs both in front and rear, poured in upon us, as rivers whose banks are cut asunder, inundate a level district. One day we learned that the American army was in close pursuit of Burgoyne, whom it was manœuvring to surround in a position which he had assumed on the heights above Saratoga. By and by, we were informed that General Fellowes, with a brigade of one thousand five hundred men, had passed the Hudson's, and taking post at the ford by which the British must necessarily cross, cut them off from all

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chance of retreat by the route which they had followed in advancing. Next it was asserted, not only that Fort Edward, but that Fort George, the Carrying-places, and Ticonderoga itself had fallen, and that every avenue of escape was effectually blocked up against the ill-fated invaders. All these rumours occasioned, as you may well believe, extravagant rejoicings among the men by whom I was surrounded; but there came in one at last which affected them very differently, and rendered me more than ever desirous of escaping, if I could, from my detestable prison.

It might be about three or four o'clock in the afternoon of the 12th, when a crowd of country-people entered the town, with intelligence that a formidable expedition, both of land and naval forces, was advancing from New York. Forts Montgomery and Clinton had both been carried by assault; Fort Constitution, abandoned by its garrison, was taken possession of; and Governor Clinton, the Republican Commandant on the station, being unable to hold his ground, there was nothing in the way to prevent the

British leader from pushing direct upon Albany. Great, indeed, was the consternation which this report occasioned, of the correctness of which no one appeared to entertain a doubt; indeed to such a height was the alarm carried, that preparations began immediately to be made for the evacuation of the place.

The confusion attendant upon these proceedings presented to me at length the opening for which I had so long panted. Our guards, more anxious to hear the news, than careful of the trust reposed upon them, not only abandoned their posts, but left every door open. Medical men, nurses, and attendants were all agape; and the very sick themselves, such of them, at least, as were at all able to move, went abroad in search of particulars which they had no means of learning within. I saw my opportunity at once, and I hesitated not to avail myself of it. Hastily throwing on my clothes, and arming myself with a carving-knife, I made a desperate rush from the ward, and hurrying down stairs, I gained the open air before my design could be guessed at. Once there, however, and

for a time all difficulties were at an end. It is true that crowds of persons blocked up the street, hurrying to and fro in every direction ; but all appeared too much occupied with business of their own to pay any attention to me. I walked through the heart of them with a steady and deliberate step, unheeded and unchallenged, and gained the high road, which leads from Albany to Kingston, without a single accident befalling to agitate or alarm me.

Now then I began, as it were, to breathe with freedom. Casting an anxious look behind, and seeing no one in pursuit, I quickened my walk into a sort of jog trot, which gradually became a run,—till at last I found myself scampering along at a rate which, had it been practicable to maintain it, must have soon carried me beyond the danger of recapture. Unfortunately, however, the severe discipline which I had undergone for no purpose, produced the very same effect which would have attended it had it been really required. I was enfeebled to a degree of which, till my strength was tried, I could have had no conception ; and at the end

of a couple of miles found, to my extreme sorrow, that my usual ability to endure fatigue had departed. I was compelled through absolute exhaustion, not only to slacken my pace, but to sit down; and I need scarcely say, that I did so in a state of violent mental excitation, which took away, in no trifling degree, from the benefits which might have otherwise attended the measure.

It seemed, however, that after so many trials, fortune was resolved at last to favour me. Not a human being made his appearance as far as my eye could reach, and I rose again soon after the sun had set, to continue my journey. As I felt myself in some measure safe, that is to say, as I could discover no danger immediately at hand, I trudged on at once more leisurely and in better spirits, determined to halt nowhere, as long as my limbs would perform their duty. It was a lovely night. The moon shone with uncommon brilliancy in a sky clear and cloudless, and the air, quiet as the breathing of an infant asleep, scarcely moved the foliage, which in great abundance shaded

the road. My route, too, lay through a district, the singularly beautiful and romantic appearance of which could not be contemplated, even in my present perilous situation, with indifference. I need scarcely remind you, that the road from Albany to Westport, in what are called the Jersey Highlands, conducts the traveller in a direction exactly parallel with the course of the Hudson's—stretching sometimes along the very margin of the river, and never diverging above half a mile from its bank. As you proceed downwards, the Hudson's itself acquires, almost at every step, a more majestic, as well as a more interesting character. Now it expands itself into a broad sheet of water, rolling on with a current apparently gentle and equable; now it is compressed between a couple of precipitous ridges, and is seen to sweep forward with more violence, and greater velocity. But it is everywhere deep, sullen, and dark—perfectly navigable to ships of almost any burthen, and as a necessary consequence, well adapted to the purposes of commerce, of which now, I believe, ample advantage is taken. At the period to which I allude, however, few

vessels of a size larger than passage-boats contaminated its surface. It flowed then through a country very imperfectly cleared, the forests extending here and there down to the edge of the water; whilst the background on either side rose into wooded heights and eminences, which, as you approached the Jerseys, assumed the character of bold mountains.

Along this romantic road, and through this romantic country, I held my course. There was a perfect silence around me, which neither the whispering of leaves, nor the monotonous rush of water, could be said with strict propriety to disturb; for sounds such as these soon cease to be distinguished, by amalgamating, as it were, with the being of him who listens to them. Few and far between were the human habitations which I passed, in none of which the faintest symptom of living inhabitants could be discerned; nay, I traversed several villages, without meeting with a solitary traveller, or beholding the glimmer of a solitary taper in a single dwelling. You will easily believe that for all these favourable contingencies, I experienced the liveliest gratitude. It

appeared to me as if Providence itself had determined to carry me safely through, and that in escaping from Albany, the chief obstacle to ultimate success had been overcome.

As I pursued my journey at a tolerably brisk place, halting but rarely, and then only for a few minutes at a time, I calculated that full thirty miles had been accomplished when the first streaks of dawn showed themselves. I was then approaching a village, the name of which I afterwards ascertained to be Loonenburgh; and feeling both exhausted and hungry, I determined, after a few minutes spent in deliberation, to ask for shelter and food from some of its inhabitants. Perhaps there was a want of prudence here; yet I calculated that among a people so simple, few suspicions were likely to be entertained, and I experienced no apprehension of being followed from Albany, now that it was left so far behind.

I accordingly pushed forward, so as to enter the place just as the sun rose; and seldom have I beheld a more attractive scene than his early rays rendered visible. The hamlet itself consisted of about ten or twelve dwellings, con-

structed, after the manner of the country, entirely of wood. Instead of adjoining the one to the other, they were built on either side of a level green or common, in the centre of which a clump of venerable oaks, the remnants, no doubt, of the original forest, grew, and they were all surrounded by neat gardens and extensive orchards, well stocked with vegetables and fruit-trees of various kinds. On every side were corn-fields and meadows, the former advancing, as it were, upon the wilderness, the latter sloping down in beautiful regularity towards the river. Flocks of sheep were scattered over the open space; ducks, turkeys, and other domestic fowls, ran at large upon the common; every house had its stack-yard amply filled, and the whole presented a striking picture both of comfort and security. It was impossible to look upon all this, without contrasting painfully the condition of the district as it now stood, with what it probably would become, in case my mission produced its desired effect. However well-disposed the leader of an invading force may be, and I did not doubt that our commander was disposed to pro-

tect the country to the utmost, it is not, as I well knew, practicable to hinder the followers of an army, if not the army itself, from committing acts of outrage and rapine; and I sickened as I thought of the ruin which in all probability hung over a spot at present so flourishing. Nevertheless, this was no time for the indulgence of feelings, very amiable no doubt, though not very profitable. I suppressed mine almost as soon as they arose, and walking forward to the cottage which stood farthest in the direction of my route, I knocked loudly for admission.

It had struck me as somewhat remarkable that though every other living thing was alert and on the move, not a human being seemed awake when I entered the village. Persons whose habits correspond with those of the inhabitants of Loonenburgh, seldom lie in bed after the sun has risen; and hence it was not without surprise that I found myself unsaluted as I traversed the common. My astonishment was, however, greatly increased, when, after knocking repeatedly, no notice was taken of the signal; and I came at last to the conclu-

sion, that the place was abandoned. With this impression on my mind, I was about to resume my progress, when accidentally looking up, I beheld a human countenance peeping at me, with evident caution, from behind a window-curtain. I waved my hand to make the individual aware that his proceeding had been detected; and shouting loudly that I was a traveller sorely in want of rest and refreshment, I stood still to wait the event. My appeal was not lost upon the person to whom it was made. In a few seconds I heard a step in the passage, which was followed by the creaking of a bolt in its socket; and the door being opened, an old man presented himself, with a ready invitation for me to enter. I was not slow in accepting it, but followed my conductor at once into a snug parlour, where the means of satisfying hunger were speedily set before me.

As soon as the cravings of appetite were removed, I began to question my host as to the cause of his own apprehensions in particular, and the deserted appearance of the village in general. He answered cautiously and with apparent reluctance, throwing out hints of danger

from all sides, and employing the expression "the enemy" in so many contradictory fashions, that it was impossible to guess to which party he intended it to apply; but I gathered pretty well, that the people of Loonenburgh dreaded the Republican, not less than they feared the Royal troops, and more than half suspected, that in their hearts they were loyalists. The most acceptable intelligence, however, which I obtained from him was, that a fleet and army, under General Vaughan and Commodore Wallace, were in successful and rapid progress up the Hudson's, and that their arrival at Loonenburgh itself might be expected by the morrow at the latest. No time was granted to question the evidence upon which the above rumour rested, ere it received a direct and most unexpected confirmation. The old man was yet speaking, when the roar of a distant cannonade became audible, which he pronounced at once to arise from an attack by the British squadron upon the Rebel works at Asopus.

I cannot pretend to describe the effect which that most sublime of all earthly sounds produced upon me. I sprang to my feet with

energies supernaturally renewed, and thrusting a piece of money into my host's hand, made ready on the instant to pursue my journey. What had I now to fear? Ten miles of level road alone divided me from the great goal of my wishes; and if fortune only favoured me as she had hitherto done, these would be compassed within the space of three hours at the farthest. The old man watched my proceedings with a subdued but sagacious look, and penetrated, beyond a question, into my character and designs in a moment,—though he said nothing to imply this, but, wishing me a pleasant journey, led me to the door, and deliberately bolted it after me.

With a step light and buoyant, in spite of the fatigues of the previous night, I pressed forward. Five minutes' walk carried me clear of the village; and I was already half-way across the cultivated land, when accidentally looking back, I beheld, to my horror and dismay, a party of mounted soldiers advancing along the road behind me. That I became visible to them at the same moment there was no cause to doubt; for though when I first caught sight

of them they moved leisurely and at a walk, they immediately put their horses to a trot, and rode towards me. What was to be done? Had this accident occurred at almost any other point, I might have found shelter in the woods, and there baffled pursuit; but now I was in the middle of an open plain, to traverse which before I should be overtaken appeared impossible. Despair, however, gave me courage. I knew that should I fall into their hands nothing could save me,—I determined to make one effort for my own preservation, and I ran with all the speed of which I was master towards the nearest thicket.

I had no sooner quickened my pace than a shout arose, which beyond all question marked me as the object of hot and desperate pursuit. This for the first moment or two acted as a stimulus to fresh exertions; but the race was a very unequal one, for I was worn down with past exertions, enfeebled by my sufferings in the hospital, and quite incapable of keeping long at the top of my speed. Already I heard the clattering of horses' hoofs in my rear, which approached every instant nearer and nearer,

whilst the friendly thicket towards which my steps were turned seemed to increase rather than diminish its distance from me. I became desperate. I looked behind,—the nearest dragoon was within two hundred yards of me, whilst the wood was fully five hundred ahead; and as my strength and breath were both rapidly failing, I gave myself up for lost. At this moment a chance appeared, faint indeed, but still within the possibility of attainment; and I grasped at it. A shallow ditch, or rather drain, ran through the middle of the field across which I was running, and by bending a little to the left, I saw that I could interpose a hedgerow between me and my pursuers. I did so, and no sooner shut them out from sight than I plunged into the drain. There I lay pressed closely to the bottom, my person being barely screened by the low edges, in a state of feeling which my imagination itself cannot now conjure up, far less my powers of description delineate.

I had barely time to act thus, when the thunder of horses' hoofs became more and more terrible. Voices, too, were heard, in loud and triumphant

clamour, till the whole troop swept by within fifteen feet of the spot where I lay. How I listened to the receding noise of the chase! with what an agony of joy my heart beat, as it became every instant less audible! till at last I ventured to look up, and received the assurance that my pursuers were gone. Now then was the time for me to act. I did not dare to rise, because I saw at a glance, that any attempt to traverse the open country must expose me, in case of their return, to immediate detection; But judging from the direction in which it ran that the drain would lead to the river, I resolved to follow it. I accordingly dragged myself along upon my belly a distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile, moving with extreme caution and no little difficulty; and my labours were amply recompensed by the conclusion to which they led. I had not been mistaken as to the termination of the drain. It not only ended at the river, as I had supposed it would, but conducted me to a spot where a small boat, with a couple of oars, lay moored to the stump of a tree. In an instant the cord which fastened it was cut; in the next I sprang into it; and

plying the oars with all my might, I was soon far beyond the reach of my mounted pursuers.

Such was the last adventure worth recording, which befell me during this memorable campaign. The Hudson's having been cleared of all American craft, by the reported advance of the British squadron, I met with no interruption during my solitary voyage, and I reached Kingston in safety a little before noon, in front of which Commodore Wallace lay at anchor. I was received by both the naval and military commanders with the consideration which I had reason to expect from them. My credentials were examined and approved, my story listened to with patience, and a promise made that General Burgoyne's requisition would be attended to in due time. That time, however, never arrived. The 13th had been consumed in the capture of Kingston; the 14th was devoted to its destruction; the 15th was spent I know not how, and on the 16th orders to march on the morrow were issued; but before that morrow came, the last act in this humiliating drama had been acted. Authentic intelligence reached

the General, of the treaty which rendered Burgoyne and his brave army conventional prisoners to the Americans; and he returned with all possible precipitation, crest-fallen and humiliated, to New York.

THE night was far advanced when Captain Macdirk brought his narrative to a conclusion; and it was easy to perceive, by the heavy eyes and nodding heads of some of his auditors, that no objection would have been offered to its curtailment. Nevertheless the customary meed of praise and thanks was not denied even to him; and the worthy man retired to rest, satisfied, I do not doubt, that he had established for himself a proud name in the list of story-tellers.

For myself, my proceedings that night corresponded in every respect with those which had occurred on the night preceding. I slept long and soundly, and was awoke on the following morning only by an announcement that breakfast waited my appearance. Nor here, again, did matters occur in any degree different from those which attended me yesterday. Again I talked of prosecuting my journey,—spoke of engage-

ments entered into and time limited ; and again my arguments were one by one met and overcome by my hospitable entertainer. For the third time, therefore, I consented to continue his guest—an announcement which gave, or appeared to give, universal satisfaction ; and for the third time when the dinner-hour returned, I found myself seated at the right hand of Major Cohorn.

"I congratulate you," said he to me in a whisper, whilst the servants were removing the cloth, "on having been prevailed upon to give us your company this day. It has fallen to the turn of those to entertain us, whom we consider as the best chroniclers amongst us, and who never detain us above half the length of time which our friend Macdirk devotes to such purposes." I expressed, as in duty bound, my perfect satisfaction, not only with the future but the past ; though I was not, in reality, distressed by the announcement thus made to me. Whether the Major's judgment was correct or otherwise, the reader must determine for himself, after he has perused the following—Captain Section's tale of MAIDA.

MAIDA.

MAIDA.

CHAPTER I.

I THINK it was on the 27th of June, 1806, that the — regiment of foot, of which I was a member, received orders to march on the following day from Messina to Melazzo. For what purpose the march was about to be undertaken, there was not a man or officer in the corps who could be ignorant. Rumours of an intended descent upon the coast of Calabria had long been afloat, receiving, as it was natural that they should, every day an increased degree of credibility; so that when the route so frequently anticipated at length arrived, surprise, at least, was not among the sensations to which it gave birth. We all knew, though not as yet formally assured of it, that our journey

would end in an immediate embarkation, and there was not an individual amongst us who looked forward to the issue with other feelings than those of unmitigated delight.

You cannot have forgotten that at the period to which I now refer, the royal family of Naples, driven from their continental possessions, were fain to take refuge at Palermo, and place themselves under the protection of the British army then stationed in Sicily. With the court came whole crowds of degenerate nobles, fleeing from an enemy whom they dared not face; who contented themselves to evince by useless and woman-like execrations, a patriotism which, had it been real, might have found ample scope for exertion in the field. This was the more to be reprobated, as the Neapolitan peasantry, particularly the natives of Calabria, wanted but a leader in order to render them formidable even to the French. Inhabiting a mountainous country, which abounds in strong military positions, where rocky eminences, and deep ravines, terminating in defiles, rough, broken, and easily defended, cut off one valley from another,—the Calabrese possess both by nature and their social habits,

all the qualities necessary to make soldiers; and had they been headed at this time by a chief on whom they could rely, would have maintained themselves, without doubt, against any disparity of numbers. Unfortunately for them, however, their nobles, though enjoying the full influence which feudal institutions are calculated to create, possessed neither courage nor energy enough to turn these to a right account. The consequence was, that the peasantry were left to pursue whatever measures, and to make whatever exertions their native hardihood might suggest; and the Peninsula became the theatre of desultory, unconnected, and disastrous warfare.

When a state of things similar to this prevails in any province, the reports which emanate from it, are all of such a nature as to convey any thing but a correct picture of events. On the present occasion, for instance, rumours the most extravagant, of the daring intrepidity of the Calabrese, and of the successes to which it led, poured in upon us continually. The brave mountaineers would never, it was affirmed, submit to a foreign yoke; they were resolved

to perish to a man, sooner than renounce their allegiance to a prince for whom they entertained the warmest affection; nay, there needed but the appearance of a small auxiliary force in their country to rouse the whole male population to arms. I am not prepared to say that these rumours received implicit credit anywhere, far less that they were believed to their full extent by Sir John Stuart; but the Queen at least, who, by the way, possessed more spirit than the whole Neapolitan Court put together, was powerfully affected by them. She saw, or professed to see, in the unshaken loyalty of the Calabrese, a proof that the hearts of Ferdinand's subjects were universally with him; and she became urgent with the British General to seat her husband once more upon the throne of his ancestors by force of arms.

Nobody can for a moment suppose that the mind of General Stuart was wrought upon by the arguments of the Queen of the Sicilies. Her entreaties, however, had weight with him; not indeed to aim at the conquest of Naples, to which his means were wholly inadequate, but to try the temper of the Calabrese, by making

a descent upon their coasts, and offering to them a rallying point. It is probable, too, that he felt a desire to distinguish his command by the performance of some memorable exploit previous to the arrival of the officer appointed to succeed him,—a feeling not only natural, but highly to be commended in a man placed under his circumstances. Nor were other and equally cogent reasons wanting to urge him on to the undertaking. The enemy had collected extensive magazines of stores and provisions at different points in the province, particularly at Monte Leone, which it became a matter of some moment to destroy; whilst the very *éclat* of doing so could not fail of deterring him from any thing like an attempt to invade Sicily itself. Besides, General Stuart was one of those who believe, that every thing which adds to the military renown of a country, adds likewise to its strength; and as he laboured under no distrust of the brave men whom he commanded, he was anxious to afford them an opportunity of proving and feeling their own superiority. But enough of disquisition.

I have said that the regiment to which I

was attached, received orders on the 27th of June, to march at an early hour on the following morning from Messina to Melazzo. You are all so well acquainted from personal experience with the effect produced upon men's minds by such occurrences, that I refrain from any attempt at describing how we felt on that occasion. Let it suffice to state, that powerful as the emotions may be which always arise in the heart of a British soldier, when assured that he will be led to meet the enemies of his country on a fair field, on no occasion, either before or since, could these have been experienced in greater force. Gentlemen, I am, like yourselves, an old soldier; one who has fought in many fields, and served under many leaders, yet I make this assertion boldly, and without fear of contradiction. You know as well as I, how great is the influence of novelty, more especially under circumstances such as that of which I am speaking. You know likewise, that to seek the enemy in a fair field, was, in the year 1806, something to which the British army was as yet little accustomed; and therefore you will not, I am sure, accuse me of

undue partiality, if I own, that never have troops rejoiced more sincerely, or exhibited their joy with greater extravagance, than we did when the order was communicated to us, concerning which I have been speaking.

The sun was just rising on the morning of the 28th, in the full splendour which marks his coming and going in southern latitudes, when the loud blast of the bugle summoned us to our stations. I should express myself in terms quite unfit to be used on such an occasion, were I to say that the signal was obeyed with alacrity merely. It was anticipated,—it was more than anticipated. Numbers never thought of undressing during the previous night, and the whole battalion clustered about the parade-ground, long before the hour appointed for muster arrived. Nor was this the offspring of tumultuous zeal, such as generally attaches to young soldiers, whose knowledge of war and its concomitant privations and dangers has been derived solely from the reports of others. Our battalion had served, not only in Holland under the Duke of York, but in Egypt; and though the numbers who

witnessed these campaigns, bore indeed no proportion to those who had enlisted since, still there was a sort of traditional acquaintance with real service amongst us, of the force of which every soldier is aware. Yet were the veterans to the full as sanguine as their less favoured comrades. Such among them as remembered Egypt only, looked back with pride, and forward with confidence; such as had served in Holland also, felt, or fancied, that they had stains to wipe out, as well as triumphs to increase; whilst the tyros desired nothing more ardently than the opportunity which even one campaign promised to afford, of taking their share in such conversations as while away the evenings in camp or quarters. But that which above all other things tended to inspire all concerned with enthusiasm, was, that there existed not a solitary source of drawback to the satisfaction arising from the prospects before us. Very few women had accompanied the regiment from England; the number of children was scarcely more numerous; and no hint was thrown out of any separation of husbands from wives, or parents from their children.

Our journey from Messina to Melazzo was, under these circumstances, one of the most agreeable which it has ever been my good fortune to perform. It is true, that as the day advanced, we suffered not slightly under the excessive heat of the sun; but to compensate that grievance, the scenery around was magnificent, whilst our own thoughts would have been sufficient of themselves to carry us gaily through hardships ten-fold more oppressive. The road which we followed led, as I need scarcely inform you, through a blooming and fertile district, where the vine and the orange, the myrtle and the olive, shed their fragrance around; whilst the prospect both to the right and left was as glorious as the imagination of man can very well conceive. On one hand lay the Mediterranean, calm and peaceful as a huge inland lake, and transparently blue, like the face of the heavens on a clear frosty night in England. On the other rose a succession of bold heights,—the roots or ramifications of Mount Etna, which reared its giant top far into ether, not exactly in a blaze, but covered with a crown of peculiar vapour, from which it is never free.

Then, again, a hamlet, a chateau, or solitary cottage, from time to time appeared, surrounded, as these always are, with tracts of cultivated land and tasteful gardens, whilst flocks of goats looked down upon us from the rocks, and the sound of the goatherd's pipe caught our ears, as often as our own martial music was silent. On the whole, I do not recollect to have performed a march replete with circumstances of higher excitement, or more lively gratification,—feelings in which every individual, men, officers, women, and even children, seemed equally to participate.

The distance between Messina and Melazzo measuring rather more than twenty miles, the day was far spent ere the latter place opened upon our view. You are doubtless aware that it is a small town, lying at the very bottom of the bay, and on the skirt of the cape, by which one side of the bay is formed; and surrounded on all sides by gentle hills, which keep both town and harbour concealed, till you arrive immediately above them. You will not therefore find any difficulty in imagining the nature of the feelings which affected us, when such a

scene as the bay of Melazzo then presented, suddenly opened upon us. Figure to yourselves the entire roadstead crowded with transports and vessels of war, from the topmasts of which a thousand flags were floating, and round which hundreds of boats were collected, some rowing to shore, others from it, and all filled with articles of baggage, stores, and warlike equipments. On the land, again, multitudes of white tents were spread over the entire face of the slope, affording temporary shelter against the heat by day, and the dews by night, to the corps as they came in; whilst guns, tumbrils, howitzers, cars, and ammunition waggons, stood regularly picketed at a legitimate distance in rear of the encampment. Then, again, there were soldiers of all arms, and in various uniforms, wandering here and there, the whole of whom, as soon as the head of our column showed itself, rushed forward to bid us welcome; whilst in a less space of time than could have been imagined necessary for the purpose, half a dozen regimental bands turned out to meet us. Nor let me forget to mention the shouts of hearty congratulation with which our

comrades greeted us. These rang through the air, stirring up to its highest pitch an enthusiasm, which was not previously dull, till the feeblest and most foot-sore amongst us, regained his strength, and marched forward with the pride and high bearing of a conqueror.

I know not whence it arose, but no tents had been provided for our accommodation, and we were in consequence moved down into the village, where quarters were assigned to us. These were not, indeed, either very commodious, or very clean; yet were we a great deal too happy in our own anticipations, to permit inconveniences, in their nature so trifling, to distress us. Fatigue, moreover, stood our friend then, as it has often done on after-occasions; and our sleep was not the less sound, because many amongst us preferred their cloaks upon the floor, to beds already peopled by extremely active colonists. For my own share, as I had never closed an eye during the night preceding, neither the continued whispers of romance, nor nuisances of which others complained, were by me perceived after the first half-hour of our arrival. I barely took time to devour a whole

some, but not very savoury supper, when I threw myself at length upon a marble table, and passed into the land of forgetfulness.

The force now assembled in and around Melazzo amounted to no more than four thousand two hundred men, and was made up of the following corps, divided and brigaded under the leaders mentioned beneath. The light brigade, composed of the light companies of the 20th, 27th, 35th, 58th, and 81st regiments, of two companies of Corsican Rangers, and one hundred and fifty battalion men from the 35th regiment, was placed under the orders of Major-general Robinson. The first brigade, made up of the 78th and 81st regiments, was headed by Brigadier-general Auckland; Brigadier-general Lowrie Cole had the second, or, as it was termed, the grenadier brigade, consisting of the 27th regiment, and grenadier companies of the 20th, 35th, 58th, and 81st; whilst the reserve, composed of the 58th, and Watteville's regiment, was intrusted to Colonel John Oswald. Twelve pieces of cannon, fours and sixes, with two light howitzers, constituted our park of artillery, to which, through a lamentable deficiency of horses,

but a scanty supply of ammunition could be afforded; whilst of cavalry we had not so much as a single troop, to reconnoitre the open country. Nevertheless, our army, though undeniably weak in point of numbers, and crippled in some of its most important points, was such as any General might have felt proud to command; whilst the brave fellows who formed it entertained both in themselves and in their leader, the most boundless and characteristic confidence.

The morning of the 29th was considerably advanced ere the troops began to assemble, though warning had been given, so early as the first blush of dawn, that the embarkation might be expected to commence every moment. Whence this delay arose, I know not. By some it was attributed to the remissness of certain native functionaries, who had not exhibited any extraordinary zeal in supplying the transports, as required; by others it was surmised, that a desire on the part of the General to give to the movement all possible effect, was alone concerned. Whether either of these guesses had a foundation in truth, I cannot pretend to

determine; neither, indeed, is it a matter of the slightest moment, inasmuch as the delay itself was productive of no evil consequences. On the contrary, it enabled us to feel our own importance the more fully, a circumstance which is never without its effect, especially among raw troops, whilst it undeniably heightened the splendour of the scene in no trifling degree. I must endeavour to describe that embarkation, for a more imposing spectacle I have not frequently beheld.

It might be about ten o'clock in the day when the regiments, being mustered on the brow of the heights, received orders to march down in columns of brigades towards the beach. This was done, the light brigade leading, and the next following in parade order, with bayonets fixed, colours flying and bands playing; after which a beautiful line was formed along the shore, bayonets were unscrewed, and the men permitted to stand at ease. In the mean while all the boats of the fleet, which had previously assembled for the purpose, were drawn up as near to the land as their draught of water would allow; and the crews standing

up with elevated oars, hailed us with a hearty shout. Behind us, again, the entire face of the high ground was covered with spectators, among whom might be discovered the King, the Queen, with the principal members of the court, who bade us farewell with enthusiastic vivats, and waving of flags and handkerchiefs. And now a gun from the Commodore gave notice, that the ships were ready to receive us; immediately upon which the embarkation began. In the most perfect order and admirable discipline, regiment after regiment stepped into the boats, which, as each division received its complement, pushed off, and rowed for the fleet. Nor was there any needless delay in bringing off the guns, with such hospital and commissariat stores as had been deemed requisite. The sea was smooth and placid; the winds were so light as in no degree to impede the rowing; and all things were effected with the regularity of clockwork. The sailors, too, exerted themselves strenuously, pulling backwards and forwards without the intermission of a moment; and hence within the space of little more than six hours was the entire expedition afloat. I

need scarcely add, that not a moment was lost in getting the fleet to sea. The troops were no sooner received in their relative vessels, and the boats which conveyed them hoisted on board, than the signal was made to weigh; and anchors were raised and topsails cast loose as it were in a moment. Next came the gradual gliding from the roadstead, and the last loud cheer given from every deck, which caused the hills of Sicily to re-echo; and all became immediately as quiet and orderly as if the people had "transacted their business on the great waters" for months.

CHAPTER II.

DURING the voyage which ensued, and which was at once brief and agreeable, no event befell worthy of record. The winds were light, but they proved favourable, sending us on our course at the rate of some five knots an hour, and the ships held their way so steadily through the water, as to hinder any of the grievances customary on such occasions from being experienced. Nor is it merely on account of the absence of just cause of complaint that I have pronounced that passage an agreeable one. Every person who has voyaged upon the Mediterranean must be aware how delicious are the sea-breezes, and how exquisitely beautiful the moon-light in that glorious climate. These we enjoyed to the full, whilst

old Etna, with his fiery crown, never appeared to more advantage than he did then. As I have already hinted, however, our voyage was an exceedingly short one; for the 1st of July found us snugly at anchor in the bay of St. Euphemia.

Nothing could exceed the promptitude and decision with which, as soon as the fleet came to its moorings, the disembarkation began. Time was scarcely allowed to remark upon the splendid mountain coast of Calabria, when we were hurried rapidly, but in admirable order, into the boats; and in less than half an hour the grenadiers and light infantry, supported by the 78th Highlanders, had gained the beach. Instantly the troops sprang to shore, and instantly they were formed company by company, no enemy making his appearance to harass or annoy them; upon which the boats again pushed off to the fleet, and fresh battalions poured to their support. But it was not deemed sufficient to secure a footing close upon the edge of the sea. A strong advanced guard pushed forward, with the view both of covering the arrival of their comrades, and

obtaining intelligence; and the event proved that the precaution thus taken was by no means useless.

From what has been already said respecting the condition of the two Calabrias, you will be prepared to learn that the French, though holding these provinces with at least ten thousand men, were not able to collect upon any given spot an army in a moment. General Regnier, to oppose the disjointed operations of the insurgents, had been compelled to break up his division into numerous petty corps, which were now dispersed hither and thither, keeping up scarcely the semblance of a communication either among themselves or with head quarters. But the whole compass of Lower Calabria is so narrow, that these could within the space of a day or two be re-united, whilst their very separation, though rendering them inefficient against a formidable enemy in the field, furnished them with much more accurate information than they could have otherwise obtained. Our advanced guard had, accordingly, not proceeded far when its videttes gave notice that a French force was in their front. This was one of the many

detachments already referred to, which being made aware of the arrival of the English, was on its march to reconnoitre, and which instantly formed as if to dispute the farther advance of our light troops. I was not present in the affair that followed, therefore can give no particular account of it. I believe, however, that a little skirmishing alone ensued, equally harmless to both parties; after which the French retreated with precipitation, leaving our people masters of the field.

Whilst this was going on in front, every nerve was strained to bring the remainder of the army on shore; and such was the diligence shown by all ranks and classes of persons that that important object was gained a full hour before sun-set. This done, the troops instantly formed, and following the route of the advance, pressed forward, taking the direction of the village of St. Euphemia, near which, upon a spot of very favourable ground, the General determined to pass the night. Pickets and outposts were accordingly planted, patrols appointed, and other precautions adopted, after which our men piled their arms, and

made ready to bivouac. Finally numerous fires were lighted, provisions and wine in adequate quantities were served out, and we lay down, with cloaks or blankets wrapped round us, in the open air.

It was my fortune on that night to take my place beside an individual, of whom I cannot to this day think without feelings of affection and regret. Percy Vernon was a universal favourite, not in his own regiment only, but wherever he was known. He had joined us some years previous to the present expedition, having obtained promotion, as was then very commonly done, from another corps; and though looked at when he first came among us with an eye of suspicion, he had nevertheless contrived, in that period, to secure the cordial esteem of the whole mess. For myself, I loved him like a brother, and I am quite sure I speak the truth when I aver, that the feelings nourished by me towards him responded only to similar feelings cherished by him towards me.

Vernon's age was about twenty, perhaps a year or two beyond it. He was rich, well connected, had received a liberal education,

and owed to nature a finely proportioned figure, with an exceedingly agreeable and manly countenance. His rise in the profession had been rapid, for he was already a captain, and he understood all the duties of a soldier, as well as of an officer, perfectly. To these, indeed, he was particularly attentive, himself setting the example of a strictness which he exacted from all under his command; and he possessed the happy and most enviable talent of securing implicit obedience, at the same time that he neither trenched upon others' dignity nor wounded their feelings. Vernon's temper was singularly amiable; there was a warm-heartedness about him which ever prompted him to acts of kindness, and a readiness to oblige even at the expense of serious inconvenience to himself: whilst a ready flow of wit, and powers of conversation not often surpassed, were admitted on all hands to belong to him. It cannot be a matter of surprise that the society of a man thus constituted should be courted wherever he was known, or that his brother officers, and especially his intimates, should regard him with almost boundless affection.

Of the events which distinguished his military career previous to his becoming a member of our mess, we knew scarcely any thing. He brought with him no introductory letters from the regiment which he had quitted, and he seemed almost to avoid a reference to it or its adventures. We gathered indeed that he had served in Egypt, at the period of which expedition he must have been little more than a boy; but unlike most boys who have smelt powder, he seemed no wise disposed to describe the campaign; and always turned the conversation into a new channel, should it by chance bear upon that point. On more than one occasion, I, from whom he kept no secrets, expressed my surprise at this; but he met my expostulations invariably with a laugh, or some good-natured joke. "Have patience, my friend," he would say; "wait till you become yourself a witness of such scenes, and you will discover that there is more of pain than pleasure attending them; and that it is quite enough to go through them in reality, without recurring to them again and again, after they are passed." This always silenced me. Though I avowed my own predi-

lection for such details, I nevertheless gave him credit for possessing good grounds on which to rest his aversion from them; indeed I learned by degrees to regard him as more of a hero, simply because he never boasted of the exploits which he had performed.

Some months had passed in this manner, when a little occurrence befell, which struck me at the time as curious, but of which I thought no more as soon as the first impression made by it wore away. It was this. It happened on a certain occasion, that a stranger was invited to dine at our mess, of whom no one appeared to know more, than that he was a Lieutenant-colonel somebody, who had visited Sicily from motives of pleasure or health. The fact was stated to Vernon and myself who had been abroad all day among the defiles of Etna, and returned just as the first bugle was sounding for dinner; and we paid no more heed to it than we were accustomed to pay to similar announcements. We ran home, dressed, and hurried off to the mess-room.

As chance would have it, Vernon filled the office of president for the week; and the stran-

ger being the guest of the regiment at large, not of any individual officer, Vernon, as usual, proceeded to take his place. He had gained the head of the table, and was making ready to assume the chair, when his eye suddenly rested upon the countenance of the guest, as the eye of the guest rested upon his. I thought poor Vernon would have fallen to the ground. His colour fled, he became deadly pale, and his whole frame shook as with an ague fit. The stranger, who saw this, and evidently felt for it, instantly held out his hand. "Ah, Vernon," cried he, in accents of marked kindness, "how delighted I am to see you;" then leaning forward whispered something in his ear. Vernon grasped the extended hand, pressed it warmly, and thanked the speaker with a look as expressive of fervent and heart-felt gratitude as one man ever threw upon another. But his natural cheerfulness by no means returned. The dinner went on, indeed, as if nothing had happened, our president making strenuous exertions to be as he was accustomed to be; but neither he nor our guest succeeded, though both manifestly desired it, in regaining their composure. In few words, the travelling Colonel quitted

us at a much earlier hour than our notions of hospitality exactly relished; and Vernon scarcely saw him gone, when he too rose from the table, and withdrew.

It was not possible to avoid arriving at the conclusion, first, that Vernon and the stranger must have met before, and secondly that in the course of their acquaintance something must have occurred painful to the feelings of the former. Every one made remarks to this effect as soon as the parties most interested were gone; and I, though I said nothing, felt that the remarks were not without a show, at least, of plausibility. I was vexed; it was not curiosity that was excited in me,—that were a feeble term to employ in such a case,—but I experienced the most irrepressible desire to penetrate a mystery, in which I involuntarily apprehended that the character of my friend was in some way or other implicated. Perhaps I had no right to do as I did, yet Heaven knows I did it from the very best motives. I quitted the mess-table instantly, and followed Vernon with the intention of extorting from him some reason for his very remarkable conduct.

I hurried off to his quarters, and presuming upon our strict intimacy, opened the door without knocking. Vernon was not in his sitting-room, so I passed through, and attempted to open the door of the chamber beyond,—but it was fastened on the inside. I knocked, and was instantly hailed by my friend, who desired to know, in a tone of displeasure, who stood without. I answered, and was immediately admitted. Upon a table opposite to me lay certain writing materials, a naked razor, and a pistol, the latter of which Vernon somewhat hastily snatched up and thrust into a drawer. I was forcibly struck by the circumstance, and turned my gaze with increased apprehension upon Vernon himself. He was pale as ashes, his lips were white and livid, and there was an expression bordering upon frensy in his glancing eye."

"Good God, Vernon," exclaimed I, "what is the matter? You are ill, or something has occurred to agitate and distress you in no common degree."

"You say truly," replied he in a stifled and husky tone, as if the very muscles of the throat

had become enlarged, and prohibited free respiration, "I am ill, very ill, so ill that life on these terms has no value! But it matters not, and I would rather it were so."

I was deeply affected by the wild and incoherent manner in which these words were uttered, no less than by the singularly abstracted demeanour of the speaker altogether; but feeling that this was not a moment in which to exhibit symptoms of weakness or evince any surprise, I thought only of devising some means by which his sufferings might be subdued. I proposed to summon the doctor; but that he positively prohibited. "No, no," said he, "it is only a fit to which I am occasionally liable, and never passes away so speedily as when I am left to myself. The doctor could do nothing for me." I did not urge the measure, and as he pointed to a seat, I took it. That I had done him an essential service by thus breaking in upon his solitude, the lapse of a few moments served to prove. Having walked several times from one corner of the chamber to another in silence, he suddenly advanced towards the table, seized a sheet of paper on which he had been writing,

and tore it to atoms; then rubbing his hand violently across his brow once or twice, proposed that we should walk abroad. I readily consented to the measure, and taking his arm within mine, we hurried off towards the strand.

The soft calm air of night, with the quiet roar of the waters as they broke upon the pebbly shore, produced their naturally soothing effect upon Vernon. We had scarcely cleared the tumult of the city, when he began to recover his habitually placid deportment, and before we had walked a quarter of an hour by the sea-side, he was completely himself. It was now for the first time that I began to inquire seriously both into the cause of his recent distressing conduct, and of his agitation at meeting the stranger; but I soon perceived that such questions would draw from him no avowal. He shrank from them, palpably, undisguisedly, and painfully. At first he would have evaded them; but finding that I pressed the matter upon him, he declared openly his disinclination to answer. "For God's sake," said he, "if you value my peace of mind, do not press me farther. The time may come, nay it must come, when you shall

know all; but if you desire to continue on terms of intimacy with me, ask me no farther questions now." There was no resisting an appeal like this. I saw that to go on must give him pain, whilst it held out no promise of satisfying my own misgivings; so I at once, and in the best humour which I could command, changed the subject.

Days, weeks, nay months passed by, without causing any circumstance to take place, calculated to recall either to my mind or the minds of my comrades the incident above recorded. As to Vernon, four and twenty hours had not passed over his head ere he became, in every point of view, the man that he ever was since he joined the regiment. The strange Colonel (whose name I never discovered) quitted Messina on the following morning; and as if his departure had been an event upon which his fondest hopes rested, Vernon was immediately restored to his good-humour and agreeable vivacity. Nay, he even excelled, or strove to excel himself. He was the life and soul of every party, gay, cheerful, witty, obliging and generous to the last degree, winning without at all seeming to court,

the absolute love of all around him, whilst in matters of duty his diligence increased rather than fell off, till he was pronounced, not by his own commanding officer only, but by the general in command of the garrison, one of the most promising officers in the service. I have already told you, that I was attached to Vernon by ties far stronger than those which usually bind one brother to another; it was but natural, therefore, that I should rejoice, sincerely and heartily rejoice, in the reputation which he was establishing for himself. I even looked forward with anxiety to the next promotion, in which his name was expected to be included, with the full expectation that before long he would take the command of some regiment; and it was already agreed between us, that as soon as that event should occur, I would obtain my next step by his recommendation. But things fell not out quite so favourably as we had anticipated. Men, they say, are born each under his own particular star; and certainly if the truth of the saying be admissible under any circumstances, it must be admitted here.

I stated some time ago, that for several

weeks previous to the arrival of the route, which sent us, as described above, from Messina to Melazzo, a variety of rumours obtained circulation, all of them tending to produce the persuasion, that we were on the eve of active employment in the presence of the enemy. You are all well aware, that among raw troops such reports are always greedily received, and industriously circulated. The projected expedition became now the standing subject of conversation, at dinner, in evening parties, on parade, and even during our rides and walks; whilst all professed their extreme anxiety to find that the hope thus held out should not prove illusory. Vernon was far from declining to join in such conversations. Like those about him, he speculated freely upon the feasibility of the scheme under consideration; but it was somewhat remarkable that while every one besides pronounced it not only within the reach of possible accomplishment, but perfectly attainable, all his reasonings tended to an opposite conclusion. He insisted that it were sheer insanity, circumstanced as the kingdom of Naples was, to attempt the re-conquest of a

state which could not defend itself from attack. He professed his utter disbelief in the stories so freely circulated, touching the loyalty of the Neapolitans generally, and their abhorrence of the French; whilst the reports of the daring hardihood of the Calabrese, and their petty victories, he turned on all occasions into absolute ridicule.

"God knows," he would continue, "no man can desire more than I, to see an opening made for our exertions on the Continent; but I am satisfied that the General who should act upon the declarations of such persons as now pester us with their intrigues, would deserve to be impeached for betraying the interests of his country, and sacrificing the lives of its soldiers."

Vernon had obtained, and he deserved to obtain, the character of a very prudent and sagacious fellow; and hence his arguments, though going decidedly against the stream of popular feeling, were invariably listened to with respect. Yet they sometimes amazed, such as, like myself, were willing to draw conclusions rather from feeling than solid reason. Nevertheless, my admiration of the man was far from experiencing a diminution,—I question,

indeed, whether it rose not higher, from a conviction, that prudence was not less operative than courage in forming his military character.

In this state things continued till the 27th of June, when, as I informed you some time ago, the order for our march arrived. It happened that Vernon and I spent that day, as we were in the habit of spending many, on the water. The officers of the regiment having built a schooner, manned it from among themselves, and none were more devotedly attached to marine excursions than ourselves; indeed, Vernon was by far the most skilful pilot amongst us, and, as a necessary consequence, the most enthusiastic sailor. There had been a sharp squall that morning, which it required a good deal of knowledge and some nerve to weather; and Vernon, having heroically carried his vessel through it, was in the highest spirits. In this mood we returned to quarters, where the hurried movements and excited gestures even of the privates upon guard, assured us, that something out of the ordinary course of events had occurred. We eagerly demanded from a corporal whom we met, what had happened.

"The very thing, Sir," replied the man, "which we have all so long desired. Thank God, the order has come at last; and to-morrow, please God, we embark."

An involuntary shout burst from my lips, in which I confidently expected that Vernon would join; but it was not so. On turning to him, I found that his mirth had suddenly deserted him.

"What!" exclaimed I, "down-hearted at such news as this?"

"No," replied he, "not down-hearted,—at least not down-hearted on my own account. But—but—I hope this is not so,—I hope we are not to embark quite so early as to-morrow."

"Why not?" asked I: "if we embark at all, why not now:"

"Because," answered he, "I am fearful that I shall not be able to accompany the regiment. Could it be deferred only till I could visit England."

"Visit England!" cried I, interrupting him: "why, man, all Italy will, I trust, be ours, before a ship could reach Gibraltar, far less England."

" Then, if I could wait for the next packet. That comes in, if I recollect right, a fortnight hence."

" Vernon," replied I, " you of course are the best judge as to the urgency of your own affairs; but as far as I am concerned, I tell you honestly, that did the life of my father depend on my staying behind the regiment, I would not stay. You must act as you see proper; but such are my sentiments."

" And they are what they ought to be," cried he, his face flushing as he spoke. " You are right. When a soldier is ordered to meet the enemy, all other considerations must yield to that of honour. Let the consequences be what they may, I will accompany the regiment; so let us go home and prepare."

We ran home immediately. Our baggage was soon packed, and what few dispositions we deemed it necessary to make, were made in a twinkling. After which we joined the mess, and spent, like our brother officers, an evening of extreme enjoyment, because of high excitation.

CHAPTER III.

I WAS too busy with affairs of my own to pay much heed either to Vernon or any one besides, from the moment when the mess separated on the 27th, up to our landing on the 1st of July. It is true, that being one of his subalterns, he and I had constant intercourse, but it was never very confidential, being on all occasions limited either to points of duty, or to the ordinary conversation of persons in our circumstances. Even during the landing we came into contact only as leaders of the same company, and we performed our first short march much as it would have been performed by persons standing towards one another in the light of common acquaintances. At night, however, when the bivouac was formed, we

drew, as it were, involuntarily together. A fire was lighted for us apart from those of the men; beside which we sat down, to discuss, as it was time we should, the business in which we were engaged.

"Well," said I, "you see our surmises were correct. General Stuart is determined at least to strike a blow before he resigns Naples into the hand of Buonaparte."

"I doubt the fact still," replied Vernon; "I am still unwilling, that is, unable to believe, that a man of General Stuart's experience will risk such a force as this in the presence of the immense masses which the enemy have at their command. In fate's name what can he gain by it? If he win a battle, he is too weak to follow it up; if he be defeated, not only are we destroyed, but Sicily falls. No, no, Section, rely upon it, that we shall abide where we are some four and twenty hours, for the purpose of trying of what stuff the natives are composed, and then return quietly to our ships, and to our old cantonments in the island."

"I hope not," replied I, "and I believe not. I am sure that no man in his senses would em-

bark on so mad an affair as this; and that our General has too much regard for the honour of his army, to withdraw till it shall have at least measured its strength with the French. A fight we ought to have, and a fight we must have."

Vernon poked the embers of the fire with the point of his sword, and was for some minutes silent. At last he said, as it appeared to me, unconsciously, "If I could believe this,—if I could have believed it—"

"What then?" asked I.

He looked up, as if surprised at my question. "To what do you allude?" said he.

"You say," answered I, "that if you could believe this—What do you mean?"

"Oh! nothing—nothing at all, I assure you," answered he hurriedly. "There are one or two affairs which I could have wished to arrange previously to encountering the hazards of a battle; but it matters little about them. I dare say I shall escape, and, if not, things must take their course."

"Nay, Vernon," replied I, "if the case really be so, it appears to me that you ought

to make such arrangements as circumstances will allow. I must, of course, run the same risks with yourself; but the chances are double that one of us escapes, than that both escape. If, therefore, there be any thing upon your mind which distresses you, tell it to me. You know that you may trust me; and should I survive, you know also that I will, to the utmost of my power, fulfil your wishes."

Vernon was a good deal agitated. He shifted his position more than once, as if struggling with some secret feeling; but he overcame the emotion at last, and replied calmly:

"As yet," said he, "the prospect of a battle is remote, and it may not, probably will not, come nearer. I will not, therefore, open my mind to you now; but should circumstances require it, I will take you at your word. So, God bless you, my dear Section, let us catch a little sleep to-night if we can, since to-morrow there may be no opportunity of so doing afforded."

He wrapped his cloak about him as he spoke, and lay down, turning, like an old soldier, his feet towards the fire. I was not slow, so far, in

following his example; whilst, in actually yielding up my senses to the influence of "tired nature's kind restorer," I have reason to believe that I considerably preceded him.

Long before the first streaks of dawn appeared in the east, the troops were roused from their slumbers. Close columns of battalions being formed, we stood ready for any emergency till daylight came in, when, instead of an order to advance, as had confidently been anticipated, our people were desired to pile arms and dismiss. "So!" said Vernon to me, with a smile of peculiar good-humour on his countenance, "I told you as much. I judged that General Stuart was too prudent to commit himself, and you see that I judged rightly; here our campaign began, and here it will end."

Though very unwilling to credit this, things certainly took a turn which went a great way towards persuading me that Vernon was not deceived. Not a hint was dropped as to ulterior operations. On the contrary, the engineers immediately set to work, stamping out the *enceinte* of a redoubt, and picketing its ditches; in the erection of which it speedily appeared

that we were about to be employed,—whilst multitudes of proclamations ready prepared for the purpose in Palermo were intrusted to any peasant who approached our camp. Vernon was now more than ever satisfied, that the expedition had been undertaken more with a view of justifying British policy to the world, than under the idea that any positive benefit would accrue from it. His spirits seemed to rise in proportion as the correctness of his theory received proof; and he even began to quiz us unmercifully on what he was pleased to term our fire-eating propensities. "So, Gentlemen," said he, "you who came on shore big with the anticipation of transmitting your names to latest posterity as heroes of the first order, how like you the aspect which affairs begin to wear? As for me, I am a poor ambitionless wretch, and can endure our present crosses with patience; but I am really sorry for you, indeed I am." I must confess that even upon me, Vernon's ill-timed raillery produced an unpleasant effect. I was sufficiently annoyed at our inaction, and became doubly so when baited about it; but that our councils were not quite so

peaceable as the banterer supposed, the issues of a few days demonstrated.

We were thus employed during the whole of the 2nd, and a considerable portion of the 3rd; bringing our redoubt very near to its completion, and receiving several bands of half-armed banditti which came in one after another with tidings, more or less correct, of the position and movements of the enemy. To these General Stuart naturally paid at least as much attention as they were supposed to deserve; but it was not till the afternoon of the latter day was far advanced, that such intelligence as he deemed authentic reached him. Then, however, he heard, that General Regnier, at the head of four thousand infantry, three hundred cavalry, and a formidable train of artillery, was in full march towards him; that he occupied a position not far from the village of Maida, where he was in hourly expectation of a reinforcement of three thousand fresh troops; and that it was his firm design, in case that corps arrived in time, to attack the British camp at an early hour in the morning. With a promptitude for which he cannot be sufficiently com-

mended, General Stuart instantly ordered his people under arms. The order was obeyed with the utmost alacrity; and before we could very well surmise why we had thus been summoned from our ordinary occupations, the line of march was formed and we were *en route.*

It has not often fallen to my lot to perform a journey, around which circumstances have combined to throw a higher degree of interest than this. As must have been anticipated, no great while elapsed ere the true cause of the movement became rumoured abroad; and the knowledge that we were hastening on towards a field of battle, stirred up a thousand anticipations, of the precise nature of which no words were adequate to create a just conception. But even this knowledge can hardly be said to have produced a more powerful effect, than was excited by the visible objects which surrounded us. We marched, be it observed, along the edge of the bay, whose broad clear waters spread out like a sheet upon our left, whilst its waves broke with a ceaseless though quiet murmur upon the shingle at our feet; which blending in the most remarkable man-

ner with the tramp of the troops, produced a concord of sounds as striking as the human ear has frequently taken in. Then, again, the objects presented to the eye were not less striking of their kind than those offered to the sense of hearing. A long column of warriors, their arms glittering in the moon's rays, met the eye of the spectator, let him gaze where he might; now pressing forward in a straight and continuous line, now bending and straggling as the curvature of the bay required, whilst mounted officers passed to and fro, sometimes in groups slowly and deliberately, at others singly and at full speed, as if on errands of importance. Nor were the guns and tumbrils, with their accompanying escort of men, objects to be passed by without something more than a glance of indifference. Heavily and slowly they rolled on, their progress being sadly delayed, as well from the absence of a sufficiency of horses as by the depth of the track; yet they moved as the artillery always does, in admirable order, the very guns appearing each instinct with vigour and vitality.

Take it for all in all, I do not think that any march which a British army has performed, could be more worthy of admiration than this; at all events I am certain that I never beheld one, which I more heartily or rather enthusiastically admired.

Midnight must have been close at hand, when the head of the column reached a spot, where the river Amato, a clear mountain stream, falls into the sea. It was an open plain, covered with fresh grass, which afforded no cover of any kind, nor the possession of any advantageous ground to an army; but being within an easy march of the position which the enemy were understood to occupy, our General determined to halt here till dawn. The word accordingly passed for the different regiments to form along the margin of the stream; the pickets were pushed across by the fords, which at this season were numerous and easy; and the arms being piled, our people lay down without lighting fires, in the order in which, if called upon, they would have stood.

I was preparing to follow the example of

my comrades, and to seek refreshment in a sound sleep, when I felt some one pull me gently by the skirt of my coat, and on looking up I immediately recognised Vernon. He stood over me with a countenance which exhibited, in the moon-light, symptoms of great uneasiness; and in an agitated and hurried tone, begged of me to rise and follow him. I did so without a moment's hesitation, and we walked along the river's brink till we had cleared the bivouac, and passed even the line of advanced sentries; when my conductor stopping short, sat down upon the grassy bank, and invited me to do the same. It was not without a sense of strong surprise that I obeyed him; but I did obey him almost instinctively, exactly as the child obeys its nurse, or the hound its master.

For several seconds after we had seated ourselves, a profound silence was maintained, neither party speaking, nor, if I could judge of Vernon's feelings by my own, desiring to speak. On my part, indeed, curiosity, not to mention any more influential principle, was too busy to permit me to begin the conversation. There

was a conviction upon me that I had been summoned hither to listen to the declarations of another, not to "insult the drowsy ear of night" by quotations of my own; and hence, though burning with anxiety to know why I was thus roused from my slumbers, I made no attempt to break in upon the fantasies or meditations of my companion. By degrees, however, this state of restraint wore away. Vernon, after gazing for a while upon the stream as it rolled by, appeared to master by a violent effort some secret repugnance, and turning abruptly, and, as it seemed, sharply towards me, said—

"You have not forgotten what passed between us on the first night of our landing?"

"Certainly not," replied I. "Our conversation was of too serious and striking a nature to be thus easily forgotten."

"You remember then," continued he, "that I pledged myself to open my mind to you in the event of affairs assuming the aspect which they actually wear?"

"I remember it perfectly," answered I, "and

all that is necessary to be added is, my entreaty, that if in any way I can be serviceable to you, you will command me."

"Thanks, Section!" replied Vernon, rising as he spoke; "a thousand thanks for that kind offer. There is not a doubt that you can serve me—essentially, vitally serve me if you choose; the only question is, whether you will perform the part that I would impose upon you."

"It is not, I trust, necessary," said I, "for me to assert, that whatever one man of honour can do for another I will do for you. We have known each other too long, and loved each other too well, for you to doubt this; and permit me to add, Vernon, that I scarcely thank you for the insinuation which the latter part of your speech implies."

Vernon turned from me as I spoke, and walked about twenty or thirty paces along the water's edge. He then stopped short, wheeled round, and so continued to pace backwards and forwards for several minutes without answering. At last he stopped.

"You do me wrong, Section," said he,

"much wrong, if you imagine that I distrust your friendship, or question your readiness to oblige whenever you feel that a claim even higher than that of friendship will permit. I am quite convinced that you would hazard,—nay, that you would sacrifice your life for me; but I dare not hope that you will do what I am impelled to request."

"I have said already," replied I, "that there is nothing which a man of honour can do that I will not at least attempt, in your service. I am sure you would not ask any thing inconsistent with my character; therefore I promise freely to obey you, if I be able, to the utmost."

Again Vernon turned from me, and walked with a hurried pace to the limits of his old bounds. But his promenade this time was more brief than before.

"Can you keep a secret?" said he, in a low and husky tone.

"Can I?" answered I: "is it you, Vernon, that doubt this?"

"And can you so far command your feelings as still to think favourably of him who commu-

nicates it, even though the communication be of a nature the most repulsive to your prejudices?"

I paused for an instant, and then said, "As I am quite convinced that you can disclose nothing capable of sinking yourself in my estimation, I promise you that the mere opposition of what you may say to prejudices, no matter how deeply rooted or long cherished, shall in no respect interfere with the intimacy that subsists between us."

Vernon seemed relieved by this declaration. He once more resumed his seat by my side; and after a struggle, which he scarcely seemed anxious to conceal, he thus began:—

"I think it is hardly possible for you not to be in some degree prepared for the humiliating confession which I am about to make. So many opportunities of diving into the mystery have presented themselves, that if you have not already fathomed it, you must be by many degrees less acute than I take you to be; but that, I am satisfied, is not the case. Section, I am a coward, constitutionally, and irrevocably a coward. Nay, start not," continued he, lay-

ing his hand upon my shoulder, as if to repress a movement to which I had involuntarily given way; "shrink not from me, as you value the peace of a wretch, already sufficiently loathsome in his own eyes; but at least hear me out before you abandon me.

"You have often rallied me on the reluctance which I exhibited to speak of Egypt, and the perils and glories of the British army employed there. You have repeatedly questioned me about events of which I ought to have been both able and willing to give you a minute detail; and more than once you have chid me for my apparent backwardness to sound my own praises. I can hardly believe that you were sincere in so doing. It is scarcely possible that a soldier could so far deceive himself as to credit that a comrade would hang back from detailing his past services, were these worthy to be recounted. You always expressed yourself with so much seeming candour, that for a while I deluded myself into the persuasion that you did not see through the miserable subterfuge with which I sought to blind you. For some time back, however, I am convinced that

you knew me all along. You satisfied me of that before we quitted Sicily; and therefore I have the less reluctance in confessing to you, as I do now, that I am a coward."

Vernon stopped here, partly to recover breath, and partly to combat against an excess of agitation which threatened to overwhelm him. Perhaps I ought to have said something by way of cheering him; indeed I felt at the moment that such would have been no more than common humanity,—yet I could not. My lips refused to utter an articulate sound; and I sat like one upon whom some tremendous calamity has fallen—so tremendous as to deprive him, at least for the moment, of the use of his faculties. Vernon's silence was not, however, of long continuance. After gasping once or twice for breath, he went on, his tones becoming more and more firm as he proceeded, till at last he spoke as a man may be supposed to speak who knows that he is undone, yet dares to look ruin in the face.

"The earliest recollections which come back upon me serve to prove, that in pronouncing myself constitutionally a coward, I fall into no

error. I remember well that even at school I studiously avoided all grounds of quarrel; that I never took part in any enterprise which threatened to lead me or my companions into danger,—not, mark you, from the elements, for of these I have ever been by some inexplicable caprice of nature fearless—but of a rencounter with lads of my own age, far less with such as were, or appeared to be, my superiors in strength and activity, I ever entertained the most overwhelming dread. It has been said that cowards are generally cruel, and even quarrelsome. Such was never my case; I always possessed discretion enough to be aware, that my only chance of impunity lay in meriting a character for good-nature and gentleness; and that from my infancy I have uniformly supported. How far this has been the case in manhood, you yourself may judge; I can only assure you, that in childhood and early youth the case was not different.

"How I came to embrace the profession of arms, conscious all the while of the infirmity under which I laboured, it would not, perhaps, be easy to say. Vanity, I believe,—the

vain desire of dressing gaily, of being an object of admiration among women, and mixing familiarly with men, was the principal motive which actuated myself; whilst my relatives were guided solely by a consideration of what they conceived to be my best interests. The rapidity with which I have been pushed forward may satisfy you, that I possessed no common influence at the Horse Guards. That it was esteemed an act of folly not to use; and I was gazetted into the —— regiment as soon as I had attained the age when boys are usually allowed to bear the King's commission.

"For some months after joining, no event befell calculated to draw my real character into the notice of others, or to force the conviction of its reality upon myself. My brother officers being in general men of liberal education and gentlemanly habits, grounds of dissension rarely, if ever, arose amongst us; and if by accident some little misunderstanding did occur, the friendly interference of men truly brave failed not to bring matters to an amicable adjustment. By this means all swaggering, as well as a disposition, not universally scouted in the army, of refer-

ring disputes to the arbitration of the pistol, were avoided, and we lived together in perfect harmony, like members of the same family. It happened at last, that the course of service brought us into the same cantonments with a corps which acted upon a principle widely the reverse. These gentlemen, tenacious of their rights one towards another, were doubly so in their dealings with strangers; and a bitter feeling soon arose between them and us. This, as a matter of course, led to disagreements, as disagreements led to challenges, and challenges to duels; till in the end, the officers of the two corps never met except to quarrel, nor parted till after the preliminaries of one or more rencontres had been arranged. I need not tell you with what care and assiduity I struggled to keep clear of such scrapes. I would frame a thousand excuses for withdrawing myself from a company into which a member of the hostile regiment was likely to obtrude; and when I found myself unavoidably drawn into collision with them, I studiously shunned such subjects as were calculated to provoke. Nay, I went farther than this. I have sat—I own

it with shame—in affected abstraction, whilst observations were hazarded, such as no other officer in our corps would have tolerated; and rejoiced that the persons advancing them retained so much of prudence or good breeding about them, as to abstain from offering to myself individually the insults which they heaped upon my regiment. But even this care, unremitting as it was, proved not wholly successful.

"I was at the play one night, and took my seat, together with the friend who accompanied me, in the front row of one of the most conspicuous boxes in the house. We came in rather late; that is to say, the first act of the piece was drawing to a close; and as the house was tolerably crowded in other places, I cannot deny that we were surprised at finding these very desirable places unoccupied; still, as no warning was given that they belonged to others, we experienced little hesitation in taking possession of them. We had hardly done so, when two officers belonging to the rival regiment deliberately quitted their seats in a box opposite, and coming round demanded, in no very gentle

terms, that we would resign our places. From my soul I believe that I should have complied with their demand, in spite of the irretrievable disgrace with which the step must have covered me, had I been permitted to obey the impulses of my own feeling; but the friend who accompanied me, though neither older nor more experienced than myself, knew better what was due to the honour of both. He peremptorily refused in his own name and in mine to move. Cards, as usual, were exchanged, and the intruders, both of whom appeared to be in a state of considerable excitement from wine, departed.

" How the amusements of that night passed off, I retain not the most remote remembrance. I had no sooner thrust my opponent's card into my pocket, than every sense became deadened, and every thought absorbed in the one horrible idea, that from the difficulties by which I was beset, no mode of escape could be devised; and that I must either appear in the field, or abandon for ever honour and advancement, and that which I valued to the full as much as either—the good opinion of my friends. Section, you are a brave

man, and cannot therefore conceive the nature of the feeling which that dreadful idea excited. Pain it can scarcely be called—at least not acute pain. No, it was a thousand times more intolerable; it was a deadening, stupefying, overwhelming consciousness of utter ruin; to be avoided only by an exertion which I knew myself to be incapable of making. By what voluntary blindness my companion abstained from penetrating into the real cause of my agitation, I have always been at a loss to conceive. It is true, that he was at once, the best-hearted and the least suspicious mortal with whom it has ever been my fate to become acquainted; yet my excuse of indisposition was at once so gross and so common, that even he must have been puzzled how to receive it. He did receive it, however, with great apparent frankness, and quitted the house, at my request, some time before the curtain dropped."

"It was agreed between us, as we proceeded homewards, that as no insulting language had been employed on our parts, nor any of which we could legitimately lay hold on the parts

of our adversaries, it was not our business to send the message, however prompt we might be in accepting it when sent. I say, this was agreed between us; but in truth I had nothing to say in the matter, giving myself up entirely to the guidance of my friend, and professing heartily to concur in his suggestions. Yet there came a ray of hope in upon me, as soon as this line of conduct had been chosen. It was at least possible, however slender the probability, that our adversaries, on recovering the use of their senses, might perceive that their ground of quarrel was far from being just; and hence that they might content themselves, as we were disposed to do, by waiting for the challenge. In this case, my honour might be saved, yet no risk run; and I felt as if a mountain had been removed from my chest as I contemplated it. But my hopes were doomed to prove baseless. There was too much rancour in the animosity of the regiments as corporate bodies, to permit private feeling to have any weight. Our brother officers were no sooner informed of the rencontre, than they declared that matters ought not to rest as they were;

but that in the event of the intruders hanging back, upon us devolved the necessity of giving the challenge. There is no arguing against a decision given by the majority of officers in your own corps. Whilst my friend freely, and I doubt not, cheerfully acceded to the expressed sentence, I could not presume to question its propriety; so I retired to my apartment, affecting—and but lamely affecting—a satisfaction, which I was very far from being able to experience.

"I pass over the history of that tremendous night. Let it suffice to inform you, that more than once the thought of instant flight, at all costs and hazards, occurred to me; and that it was only by an exertion, of which I did not believe myself capable, that I resisted the desire which grew out of it. As to sleep, that was a blessing far beyond my reach; I never lay down, but paced my room, from corner to corner, in a state which beggars all power of language to pourtray.

"I was thus occupied, and the first rays of the sun were beginning to make their way through the crevices of my shutters, when a

loud knock at the door roused me. There was but one reason to be assigned for such an interruption at this hour; and to that, as you may believe, my excited fancy turned at once: the friend of the officer, with whom I had exchanged cards, was, without doubt, at hand, and the challenge must be declined or accepted. I gasped for breath, as the appalling thought occurred to me; and so far from hastening to admit the visitor, I reeled back, in a species of conscious fit, powerless as an infant, into a chair. The stranger knocked again. I struggled hard to recover some portion of self-possession, and I succeeded. 'Who is there?' demanded I. You may judge how I felt, when the voice, not of a stranger, but of the Adjutant, made answer, by requesting instant admission. I sprang to the door, undid the fastening, and the Adjutant stood before me.

"'What! up and dressed already,' exclaimed he, surveying me from head to foot with an approving glance—'or, by heavens! in the very garb of yesterday! This is as it ought to be; and heaven knows that no man would more willingly lend a helping hand in carrying you

honourably through the affair than myself; but mine, I regret to say, is a far less pleasant duty. Vernon, I am sorry to tell you, that what passed yesterday in the theatre, passed under the eye of the General, who, by some means or other, has discovered all your names, and I am come by his orders to inform you, that you are to consider yourself under arrest. The same message has been sent to all the parties, and you are to meet at the General's quarters at twelve o'clock to-day.'

"What a communication was this to a man labouring under the feelings which overwhelmed me! I could have caught the Adjutant to my heart, and poured out such blessings upon his head as the poor criminal respited on the scaffold, pours upon the head of the messenger who brings his reprieve. I could have said or done any thing, however extravagant or unworthy; nor was it without a violent struggle that I suppressed the impulse which would have led to such results. But I did suppress it. I even affected to receive the official communication with the deepest distress, a matter which had clearly been anticipated; and I went so far as

to throw out hints as to the practicability of eluding it. Here, however, I found that a sense of duty far outbalanced every other consideration.

"'No, my friend,' replied the Adjutant, 'however readily I may enter into your chagrin, and lament that there should be cause for it, I can neither advise, nor even wink at a breach of military law. You are *bonâ fide* a prisoner; as such you must continue till regularly released, and that, I apprehend, will not be the case till you have mutually given and accepted apologies. But do not distress yourself. Other opportunities will not be wanting of chastising these fellows for their insolence.' He retired as he said this, leaving me in a frame of mind diametrically the reverse of that into which he imagined that I would fall."

CHAPTER IV.

"You have doubtless anticipated the result of this adventure, and of the interview with the General, to which it led. On repairing to his presence at the appointed hour, I found there, not my own comrade only, but the two persons who had picked a quarrel with us in the theatre, to all of whom the brave veteran read a lecture, such as the circumstances of the case seemed to demand. We were then desired to make mutual explanations, which could in no degree hurt the feelings of either party, or induce one to assume an ascendency over the other: after which, we shook hands, and were dismissed to our quarters. But the affair ended not here. That very evening there came an order, directing us to march at an early hour in the morn-

ing to a station many miles distant, where we continued quietly and happily for some weeks.

"The adventure of which I have just spoken, though it redounded to my advantage, and served to impress my messmates with a favourable opinion of my courage, brought more forcibly than ever to my own mind, the conviction that Nature had formed me a coward. It would have been an act of common prudence under such circumstances, had I quietly withdrawn from a profession, to fulfil the duties of which I knew myself incapable; and more than once I seriously pondered upon the measure, but I found my relatives so decidedly opposed to it, that I gave up my own judgment, out of a very mistaken and unfortunate deference for theirs. Yet I much question whether I should not have carried my point after all, had I not, about this time, received promotion, being appointed to a lieutenancy in the —— regiment, then serving under Sir Ralph Abercrombie in the Mediterranean. In an evil hour I consented to join that corps. I set sail from Portsmouth in a frigate for the purpose, and overtook my new regiment at Malta, just as it had returned to the

transports, and was preparing to follow the fleet on its progress to Egypt.

"I pass by the particulars of that voyage. It would but ill-accord with the motive which prompts me to lay before you these details at all, were I to speak of pleasant days at sea, or days not less pleasant at Marmorice, on the coast of Caramania. Enough is done when I remind you, that after a sojourn of some weeks at the latter place, we once more put to sea, and arrived in the Bay of Aboukir on the 2d of March 1801. One event, however, in which I felt myself peculiarly interested, must not be omitted. At Marmorice, the —— regiment was joined by a new lieutenant-colonel, who had previously served as major in the corps from which I had been recently promoted, and with whom, whilst attached to the latter corps, I had been on terms of strict intimacy. You saw that individual, Section. It was he whose presence at our mess affected me so violently on a late occasion; and though you expressed astonishment at the circumstance then, you will neither express nor experience a feeling of the kind, as

soon as you are made aware of the sequel of my story.

I have said that we reached the Bay of Aboukir on the 2nd of March, which we entered with a signal, flying from the mast-head of every ship of war, for the troops to prepare for an immediate disembarkation. The enthusiasm displayed by persons of all ranks as soon as the telegraph was explained to them, I cannot pretend to describe. The very air rang with their shouts;—yet on me no other effect was produced than that which ought to have been anticipated. I saw before me the prospect of a violent and sudden death; and I saw no more. You may judge, therefore, of the extent of my satisfaction, when a strong breeze from the north sprang up, causing a surf to run on the drifting sand beach through which no boat could live; and the flags which had hitherto floated like meteors in the air, were one after another lowered. Though quite aware that the dreaded moment must come, and that delay must render it doubly terrible, I was nevertheless so completely under the dominion of terror, that I

blessed Providence for the respite, and prayed fervently that the gale at which others murmured, might never lull.

"In this manner nearly an entire week was spent, both men and officers evincing every symptom of ardour to meet the enemy, whose preparations to render that meeting a serious one were too openly conducted to escape observation. At last, however, the gale moderated; and towards evening on the 7th, a signal was again made, that the landing would take place on the morrow. Few preparations were required on this occasion, all things having been put in order long ago; but these few were sufficient to deprive of all self-command a wretch so lost to every manly feeling as myself. The boats were no sooner hoisted out than the last remnant of prudence forsook me; and I adopted the usual course of cowards on such occasions, by complaining of violent indisposition. "I hope not," said the commanding officer, whose private attachment induced him to look with a favourable eye even upon such a proceeding as this. "The present is a moment when no soldier ought to be sick, and you,

Vernon, will, I am sure, fight manfully against disease, rather than desert your comrades." To say that I felt humbled by such an address, would be to convey but a very inadequate picture of my state of mind. I ran below, threw myself on my berth, and almost resolved to encounter every risk rather than disappoint the good opinion which the Colonel had formed of me.

"It might be about two o'clock in the morning of the 8th, when a rocket thrown up from the Admiral's ship warned those embarked that the long looked for hour had arrived. You must know that the fleet lay at this time in a long double line, having three armed ships as a sort of advanced guard just within gun-shot of the shore, round which the boats, after loading with troops had received directions to assemble, that all might pull for land at once and in order. The distance from our transport to the appointed rendezvous could not fall short of three miles; whilst many others were full eight miles off, and some even farther removed. Much time, therefore, would necessarily be wasted in proceeding thither; and as all the boats of the fleet,

as well flats as others, were incapable of conveying more than six thousand men at a time, it occurred to me, that if I could avoid being thrust into the first division, I might escape,—the dangers of the landing at least, might be evaded. I resolved to adopt that course at all risks. My absence from my proper company not being observed in the dark, I had the satisfaction of hearing it row off, securing myself all the while below; nor did I again venture upon deck till the lessening tumult assured me that I could not, if I would, make my cries heard. I then ran up the companion, affecting the utmost apprehension lest I should be left behind; and I acted the part of one chagrined and mortified with so much address, as to convince those about me that I was what I pretended to be.

"As I now felt myself secure, at least for a time, my self possession so far returned, that I was able to watch the progress of that memorable enterprise, with considerable coolness and even interest. The night was calm and serene, and though there was no moon in the sky, thousands of stars shed an indistinct glimmer over the bosom of the deep. By the

light of these I could perceive boats moving in every direction; and the perfect silence which prevailed enabled me distinctly to overhear the hollow sound of the oars as they dipped into the water. Who but myself could have laboured at such a moment under the influence of bodily terror? yet to bodily terror was I so much a slave, as not only to feel nothing of the enthusiasm which inspired others, but absolutely to hug myself on the success of my scheme. Section, when I look back to that period in my history I lothe myself,—how then can I expect that you will not lothe me also?

"Day dawned at length; and the spectacle that then opened was one which no man who happened to behold it will ever forget. Already had a large proportion of the flotilla assembled round the advanced ships; the remainder, pulling with all their might, were gradually closing in; whilst on shore I could distinctly perceive, by the aid of my telescope, columns of French troops mustering to receive them. And now, about half past eight o'clock, the entire division was mustered, and a regular line, extending, perhaps, a mile, or something less, from one flank to

the other, was formed. For an instant all was still, when, in obedience to some signal which I was too far removed accurately to observe, the whole began to advance. Coward as I was, and still ingrossed with plans for my own personal security, even I could not but gaze with breathless interest upon the scene. On the flotilla went, covered by a couple of bomb-vessels, which instantly began to throw shells upon the beach; and headed by several gun-boats and armed launches, which, as they approached the shore, likewise opened their fire. Not so the enemy. One half the passage must have been completed ere they returned a shot; but when they did return it, the effect was perfectly appalling. The Castle of Aboukir, and the entire line of sand-hills, which guard, as it were, the beach, became at once enveloped in a cloud of smoke; and the roar resembled that of a thunder-storm amidst the valleys of Mount Etna.

"As there was not a breath of wind to disperse the smoke, which hung in dense masses over the scene of action, it was only at intervals that I succeeded in obtaining a glimpse of the effect produced by this murderous salutation;

but when I did obtain it, the sight was horrible. The whole surface of the sea in front, in rear, and around the flotilla, boiled and bubbled like water in a heated cauldron; shells burst in the air; and a boat struck from time to time would totally disappear. But not for a moment was the faintest symptom of dismay exhibited, or a check given to the steady and forward course of the rowers. At last the leading barges touched the land, and a blaze of musketry ensued. Of what followed, I cannot pretend to give any account. I saw but masses of people moving hither and thither, in the midst of volumes of smoke illuminated from time to time by the blaze of fire-arms. I heard only the roar of cannon and rattle of musketry, broken in upon for a brief second by loud cheers;—but as to the details of the action, these you must learn elsewhere. Of one fact, however, and to me it was an important one, I was, indeed, a witness. The bearing of the fire proved to me that the enemy were repulsed, and its gradual suspension led me to hope, that they had sustained a decisive and signal defeat.

" In the mean while the seamen having gallantly conveyed the first division on shore, lost no time in pushing back for the second. I beheld the boats gradually near us with a desperation that rendered me for the moment proof even against fear; and I sprang into one of the boats with a readiness which gained for me the applause of all who witnessed it. Heaven knows it was the act not of a brave but of a mad man—of one who saw no escape from danger, and therefore dared to face it; and my proceedings immediately afterwards might have satisfied even the most prejudiced, that I was influenced by no true feeling of a soldier. I would have thrown myself down in the bottom of the flat, had not its crowded state hindered. But I shrank up into a corner, bending my head at every shot, though none reached within many yards of us; till the very privates began at last to make remarks, and the rowers to mock me. What were such insults to me? I felt them not, nay I hardly noticed them; I saw only my own danger through the magnifying lens of excessive terror.

" Noon was near at hand, and all firing

except from the castle had ceased, when we gained the shore; but the spectacles which met us there, were certainly not of a nature to reconcile one like me to the trade of war. The beach was covered with dead and dying men, caps, firelocks, fragments of boats, and other evidences of recent battle. My blood curdled as I gazed upon them; I became like one deranged; and instead of paying attention to the men or assisting to form them, I ran towards the sand-hills, anxious only to escape from horrors, the proximity of which threw me into a state of frenzy. As my own company was already in advance, this strange conduct on my part excited the less attention. It was remarked, indeed, that my manner might have been more collected, and that, seeing I had chosen to attach myself to the second division, I ought to have acted as if I really belonged to it; but soldiers are seldom harsh in their criticisms so long as a comrade's face is to the front, and my agitation was liberally attributed to the excessive zeal of an enthusiastic tyro.

"I came up with the advanced portion of my

regiment just in time to obtain a glimpse of the French army, now in full but orderly retreat along the lake. Nothing could be finer than that movement. They marched in column, carrying off all their guns with them which had not fallen during the action into the hands of the conquerors, and covered in the rear by a small body of well-mounted cavalry; but to me the sight was chiefly gratifying, because it seemed to promise no immediate renewal, at all events, of hostilities. I took courage as this idea arose in my mind; and when congratulated by the commanding officer on the promptitude with which I had shaken off my illness, I contrived to answer like one who really felt what he said. But I have every reason to believe, that even thus early he rated me at my true value; and the lapse of a few days served to set all doubts and surmises at rest.

"As soon as the whole of the second division came up, the army pushed forward in columns of regiments by brigades; not, however, for the purpose of pursuing the enemy, but merely that a new and more advantageous position might be assumed. This done, we again halted, forming

into four lines, which extended from Lake Aboukir on the left, to the sea on the right; and here, during the 9th, the 10th, the 11th, and part of the 12th, we remained inactive. Not that these days were wholly wasted; on the contrary, portions of the troops were employed from morning till night in the conveyance of stores and provisions from the beach; but as far as military operations were concerned, we were idle, and I, as a necessary consequence, easy. On the 12th, however, an advance took place, with the tide of which, as I was now irrevocably in its vortex, I was swept along.

"It might be about ten or eleven o'clock in the morning of this day, when Sir Ralph Abercrombie made his appearance in camp, and the troops, in obedience to orders previously issued, stood to their arms. There was at this time no enemy, nor the trace of an enemy, in our front. The French, after the affair of the 8th, showed not so much as a patrol of cavalry; and hence no one ventured to hazard a conjecture as to the moment when we were likely to fall in with them. As long as matters con-

tinued thus uncertain, even I contrived to wear a countenance not dissimilar to that worn by those about me; and hoping, I scarce know what, almost as vehemently as I feared, I stepped forward. The day was intensely hot, and the reflection of the sun's rays from the sandy plain which we traversed, produced a violent effect not only upon our sight but our respiration. Nevertheless we pressed on, all, as it seemed, in the highest possible spirits, and all eager for a fresh opportunity of putting the valour of our rivals to the test. Fortune had determined not to keep us in this respect long in suspense. Towards evening the French army became visible, strongly posted among some sand-hills, and covered in front by a grove of tall and graceful palm-trees, about four miles in advance of the ancient city of Alexandria, our approach to which they seemed resolute to dispute. Of course an immediate attack was anticipated, for which every man and officer professed to pant; but our leader, more experienced as well as judicious than his followers, determined otherwise. Having closely reconnoitred the enemy's dispositions, he ordered the

columns to halt; and we bivouacked that night within gun-shot of the French outposts.

"I am not conscious of having exhibited, during the progress of this preliminary operation, any signs of that weakness, which I am far from denying that I felt. That I must have done so, however, and done it in a manner not to be overlooked, I soon received the most satisfactory testimony,—if, indeed, I may so express myself with reference to an interview, the remembrance of which causes me to blush even when alone. Our regiment had scarcely taken possession of its ground, when the orderly for the day delivered a message, the purport of which was, that the Colonel desired to see me. I obeyed, in a frame of mind such as a gally-slave need not envy, and followed my conductor to a spot, where, far apart from all interruption, my former friend waited to receive me.

"Having ordered the man back to the lines, and kept silence till he was beyond the reach of ordinary voices, the Colonel, in a tone of mingled firmness and affection, entered at once upon the subject which was ever uppermost in

my mind. He alluded with regret to the indisposition which had so suddenly and so unaccountably seized me at the moment of debarkation; he stated his knowledge of my wild and unsoldierlike conduct in the boat, and on the beach; and finally he asserted, that with his own eyes he had this day remarked in me that which he could not remark twice in any officer under his command. 'Vernon,' continued he, 'I will speak plainly. If my suspicions be well-founded, and your nerves are so constituted as not to withstand the shock of battle, it is high time, for your own sake, that you quit the service. I have sent for you at present to inform you, that to-morrow the army will be engaged. If you feel that you cannot do your duty, there are means of sending you back quietly, yet screening you from shame, to the fleet; and my personal regard for you is such, that I will exert them. If you have reason to hope,—I say not if you are certain,—but if you have reason to hope that you are not what some suspect, then let my words keep their place in your memory. The eyes of the whole regiment will be on you, and one false step, one attempt

to flinch, must ruin you beyond the hope of redemption.'

"I cannot pretend to delineate what I felt, when the brave and good man, having ended his address, paused to receive my answer. Had there been about me one spark of common manhood, I should have at once assured him that he mistook my character, and grasping at the opportunity presented of wiping away a stain, as yet imperfectly inflicted, I should have determined, and adhered to the determination, of courting danger on the morrow, wherever she was to be found. Section, I did neither of these things. Personal fear, the dread of death or mutilation, overcame all dread of disgrace; and after a faint struggle, I expressed my readiness to return to the fleet. O that the earth had opened her mouth, and swallowed me at that moment! The remembrance of it is as a whip of scorpions, tormenting me day and night. I have brooded over it when awake, and dreamed of it in my slumbers, till reason has all but forsaken me; yet I was calm, and even collected, when I uttered the damning confession, that I could not do my duty, nor enter

a field of battle. The Colonel turned from me in coldness and disgust. 'Be it so, Mr. Vernon,' said he; 'but from this hour never show yourself at the mess of the —— regiment. You will find your name in orders as the officer appointed to take charge of the commissariat and purveyor's stores, of which the depôt will always be a march or two in rear of the column. To that creditable office I leave you; and the sooner you can effect an exchange into some other corps, the better.'

"I hurried back to my comrades, not, indeed, callous to the degradation which had fallen upon me, but too happy in the prospect of personal impunity to give to it more than a passing thought. They remarked upon my change of manner, and demanded the reason, which I, of course, took care to explain in a manner widely at variance from the truth; but there is no ground for deceiving either myself or you into the persuasion that the truth was long concealed from them. We were yet on the subject when the orderly book was handed round, containing a paragraph, which intimated to me that

I was to return to the coast without delay, and take charge of the stores till relieved.

" ' We wish you joy,' said my companions, as they handed me the volume.

" ' Of what ?' asked I, in affected ignorance.

" ' Of an appointment, doubtless, very much to your taste.'

" I ran my eye hastily over the volume, and would have given utterance to a burst of pretended indignation, had not some remnant of shame checked me. I looked up with that confused stare, which a man, conscious of guilt, never fails to employ, and seeing their eyes fixed upon me in penetrating glances, I shrank from them. I rose without saying a word; and humbled to the dust, yet too much of a coward to risk a life no longer worth preserving, I slunk, rather than marched, to the rear.

" Such is a correct detail of my services in Egypt; and now can you wonder that I have always shown an indisposition to touch upon the subject ? No, Section: with these purveyor's stores I remained, during the entire campaign, an object of abhorrence to myself, and

contempt to others, till an attack of ophthalmia fortunately furnished an excuse for an abrupt return to England. Yet was my promotion still permitted to go on. A company had been purchased for me, during my absence from home, into your regiment, where, up to the present moment, I have enjoyed almost uninterrupted happiness. But the worst of all remains yet to be stated,—I am still a coward,—still as palpable and absolute a coward as ever. Yes, Section, though I have reasoned with myself a thousand times on the subject, and come occasionally to the conclusion, that it were better to perish at once than live despised, I cannot, now that the moment of trial is at hand, count upon my own firmness. I tremble for to-morrow. Yet I will go into action, let the consequences be what they may; and it is to avert the most tremendous of these, that I now throw myself on your mercy. Will you befriend me?"

It was not without a violent struggle that I succeeded in stammering out an assurance, that whatever I could do to aid him should be done.

"Then hear my solemn request," continued

he: "Should I, in the hour of danger, exhibit signs of weakness, remind me that more than life is at stake:—should your remonstrance fail of restoring me, shoot me dead on the spot. I wish to die, and I would rather die by your hand than my own."

You will readily believe that I neither gave, nor thought of giving, a pledge to commit murder,—far less meditated an act so desperate; but I exerted myself strenuously to allay his irritation, and to give a tone to his spirits. I reminded him that during the Egyptian campaign he was little more than a boy, and that many a boy, after shrinking from danger, has proved himself in the end a hero. But my arguments were of no avail. He continued firmly impressed with the conviction, that in to-morrow's battle his character would be sacrificed; whilst I lay down under no very pleasant apprehension, that his fears would prove too well founded.

CHAPTER V.

NOTWITHSTANDING the painful effect of such an interview as that just described, my sleep was sound and refreshing, and suffered no interruption, till a general stir amongst those about me gave notice that the hour of muster was at hand. I rose without a moment's delay, and casting aside my cloak, which was heavy because saturated with the dews of the night, placed myself as usual on the flank of the company. Here I looked round, not without something akin to misgiving, for Vernon; but my doubts had done him injustice. He was in his proper station, if not active and alert as became him on such an occasion, nevertheless perfectly quiet, and, as it appeared, collected, though of the expression of his countenance it was impos-

sible to judge, on account of the darkness. Still I was sincerely rejoiced to see him there; and for the first time since his distressing confession was made, ventured to encourage a hope that even now his case might not be desperate.

Day dawned at length with the rapidity and splendour which accompanies its approach on the coast of Calabria, and exhibited a scene upon which the most cold-blooded could hardly look with indifference. Behind us lay the bay, smooth and quiet, girdled in on either hand by the bold promontories which protect it, and alive with vessels of all sizes and descriptions, some at anchor, others under sail. Immediately in our front ran the Amato, a clear shallow stream, bending across the bottom of an extensive valley, and forming, as it were, the base of the area, into which, from the direction in which our faces were turned, it was evident enough that we were about to penetrate. Then, again, hill rose above hill on every side, some of them bold, rocky, and precipitous, others sloping gently upwards with graceful woods, or scarcely less graceful corn-fields; whilst the background was formed by a heavy mist, which rose slowly

and with singular beauty, into the sky. But no great while was allowed for the indulgence of admiration. The pickets being called in, and the line of march formed, the word was passed quietly to advance; and in five minutes after the whole army was in motion.

I have already stated that the Amato is a shallow mountain stream, fordable in almost every direction, except at the season of floods. No difficulty, therefore, was found in passing it, after which our little column took a direction somewhat more to the right, and plunged at once into the valley. And now the panorama became at every step more and more sublime, as well as interesting. We found ourselves at the gorge of a long strip of level country, hemmed in on either hand by hills, and laid out in fields of luxuriant corn, rich meadows, and flourishing orange-groves. Across the face of this, which might measure in some parts four miles, in others not more than two, in width, ran here and there a variety of ridges, pushing themselves out, as it were, from the flanking mountains, some of which were clear and highly cultivated, others shaggy with tall wood, and broken with

rocks. But the object which soon drew to itself the principal share of our attention, was the French army. We had no sooner made the turn, and faced up, as it were, towards the Adriatic, than it opened upon us, and a front more imposing has seldom been shown by an enemy.

You are, doubtless, aware that General Regnier had been joined the evening before by the three thousand men of whom he was in expectation, and that his force at this moment amounted to seven thousand infantry, three hundred cavalry, and a considerable train of field artillery. Of the fact of that junction we had not been informed; yet a single glance sufficed to assure us, that the corps now opposed to us must greatly exceed our own, if not in composition, at all events in numbers. Its position, too, was an exceedingly striking one; it stood in columns of regiments, with guns in the intervals, and cavalry in squadrons near them, on the summit of one of the ridges of which I have already spoken,—a bend in the Amato sweeping across its front, and thick impervious woods covering its flanks. What the French general's designs might be, we of course could not tell:

his attitude was that of a man who had not yet come to a decision whether to give or receive the attack ; but it was very evident, that on whatever course he might determine, the collision would be a tremendous one, inasmuch as both he and his followers seemed full of confidence.

We were at this moment, as nearly as I can guess, about four miles from the base of the enemy's position. To reach it, we were necessitated to traverse a plain, during our progress through which every movement must be observed.—I had almost said every file counted by the enemy ; and there were those amongst us who ventured to suggest, that to press on under circumstances so unfavourable, could tend to no fortunate result. Happily for the honour of the British arms, such ideas were entertained neither by the General in chief nor by a single individual of rank. A short halt was made in order that a line of battle might be formed ; and the following is the order into which the army was immediately distributed.

In the first line were placed the light brigade, the 78th and 81st regiments ; the light

troops holding the right, the 81st the left, and the 78th the centre. With these were appointed to move a due proportion of artillery, of small calibre, but admirably served. The second line, if I may so call it, consisted of General Cole's brigade, so disposed as to be out of the range of the first fire, but sufficiently at hand to support any portion of the front line which might seem to be pressed. The reserve, again, consisting of the 58th, and Watteville's regiments, brought up the rear, at a greater interval from the second brigade than it was from the first. Such were the arrangements made almost as soon as the proximity of the French army had been ascertained; and the event proved that they were as judicious as they were necessary.

Whilst these formations were going on, many an anxious eye was turned towards the enemy's camp, throughout which, almost at the same moment with our halt, a general commotion was seen to arise. The regiments and brigades, breaking off from their defensive order, were observed to form into three long columns, the heads of which were soon lost in the woods;

and a notion gradually spread abroad that Regnier, confident in the numbers and courage of his troops, was about to abandon his strong ground, and meet us on the plain. Great was the joy manifested by persons of all ranks as soon as this report began to circulate. A fair field with room enough, is all that a British soldier wants; and if these be granted, he very rarely counts upon the possibility of any other result besides a glorious one.

And now the word was given to advance. In a cool and deliberate manner, such as would have disgraced no parade-ground in England, the front line obeyed, the second with the reserve remaining with equal steadiness where they were, till the proposed interval had been made good. Then they also, one after the other, stepped forward, and the scene became as deeply and strikingly picturesque as it is possible for the human imagination to conceive. Nor did it obtain this character altogether from the warlike adjuncts, so to speak, thrown around it. Occurrences took place on that occasion which are very rarely to be met with, except,

if we may believe our transatlantic warriors, on the fields of India; but which, let them happen where they will, certainly heighten in no ordinary degree the interest of a battle field.

I told you some time ago, that the valley of St. Euphemia was in a state of high cultivation, large portions of it being laid out in corn-fields. This being the season of autumn, numerous groups of reapers were scattered over them, who, instead of flying to the mountains, as might have been expected, laid down their sickles and became spectators of the strife. Our first line passed more than one of such groups, the individuals among which waved their hats, and cheered us loudly, each communicating all the information which he possessed, as to the numbers and designs of the enemy. But no great while elapsed ere intelligence on these heads, more to be relied upon than the reports of the country people, came upon us. As the enemy were in movement equally with ourselves, and the distance which originally divided us fell short of four miles, every instant brought the hostile lines nearer

and nearer to each other; so that in about half an hour after the simultaneous advance began, we were fairly in presence.

You can conceive nothing more imposing, nothing more animating, yet terrific, than the gradual approach of these armies. For some time after they crossed the river, the French were totally concealed from us, the plain being perfectly level, and covered with standing corn. Something less than a mile may have divided us, when the glitter of their bayonets began to appear. This was eagerly pointed out to us by the country people; but our men, having been cautioned to maintain a profound silence, seemed to pay no heed to it, marching forward in steady array, as if at a review. Now the tops of their caps began to rise above the corn-stalks; now the tread of feet and heavy roll of artillery were heard; and now a gun was fired. It was from the enemy, but did no execution. Still the battle may be said to have commenced; for from that moment the discharge of their field-pieces was incessant.

I had not been unmindful, in spite of the

exciting circumstances which surrounded me, of my promise of last night. Though I could not absolutely abandon my own post, I nevertheless contrived to appear from time to time at Vernon's side, and to give him such encouragement as words can convey at a moment so awful. At first he appeared to profit by my hints; he thanked me as each was uttered; and once more stepped up to the line, from which, as it seemed involuntarily, he had begun to lag. As we neared the enemy, however, and the reapers warned us of what was about to happen, he became less and less attentive. His face was pale, his lips livid, his stare fixed and vacant, and the sense of hearing, at least the faculty of understanding, appeared to desert him. His only reply to my exhortations was now a ghastly smile, more horrible, and more afflicting, than I ever looked upon before or since. But when the enemy's fire opened, all self-possession abandoned him. It was to no purpose that I put him in mind that honour, fame, self-respect, every thing which a man values, or ought to value, was at stake

Three shots were not discharged ere he disappeared, and the regiment never saw him afterwards.

In the mean while, the opposing lines drew at every pace nearer and nearer, till at last each was enabled to command a full and perfect view of the other. The French came on with every show of confidence, to which, indeed, their preponderating numbers were well calculated to give birth, whilst our people pressed forward to meet them, not a whit more doubtful as to the result. And now our artillery began to open, with an effect which contrasted strongly with that produced by the enemy's cannonade. In general, the French gunners are excellent; they have given us ample reason for allowing this, and we have never denied it; but to-day their fire was as worthless as ever came from the merest recruits. Not one shot out of fifty took effect; almost all passing over our front line, and falling short of the second. It was not so with our pieces. Every shot told, and grape, shrapnel, and canister, swept away whole sections from the ranks that received it. You all know the effect which is produced upon an

infantry line, when it witnesses the able practice of its own artillery. As each file of Frenchmen fell, our brave fellows raised a shout of cruel, perhaps, but allowable triumph; and loud and frequent were the plaudits bestowed upon the gallant blue coats, who so ably supported them. Nor was this the only circumstance from which our regiments, especially such as had hitherto seen no service, began to draw the most favourable auguries. It was observed that the French marched but indifferently; that they preserved an exceedingly irregular line, and straggled and waved from side to side, as often as some trifling obstacle came in their way; from all which, our recruits deduced the natural conclusion, that they themselves were far better drilled, and therefore more perfect soldiers than the enemy. But events were assuming at every instant a more decisive turn. The lines were rapidly approximating; and not artillery only, but musketry, and the bayonet, seemed on the eve of being brought into play.

The centres of the British and French armies might have been about two hundred and fifty yards apart, when the first musketry fire which

had yet been heard, arose upon the right. It was a desultory tiraillade, the skirmishers there having fallen in, and exchanging, as is their custom, long and uncertain shots. But the enemy seemed to treat it as a signal for general action. All at once they halted, closed in their ranks, and, after a moment's apparent hesitation, fired a volley. This we received without returning it, till we had reduced the intervening space to little more than a hundred and fifty yards, when we also halted, and our people poured in a regular and well-directed volley. Without a moment's pause they reloaded, the enemy keeping up all the while an incessant rattle, and, with the same coolness which marked their previous salute, repeated it. In the whole course of my military career, I never witnessed any thing more murderous than these discharges. Whilst on our side very few men had fallen, the clearing away of the smoke exhibited the French line torn, as it were, into fragments; huge gaps staring us in the face, and the whole of the ground covered with killed and wounded. A loud shout gave testimony that the effect of their practice was not lost

upon the British soldiers. Instead of repeating their fire, they brought their muskets to the charge, and at double-quick time rushed on.

The French are a brave people, and it is well known that from the charge of no nation besides our own have they ever recoiled; but the flashing of a British bayonet is a sight upon which, even thus early in the war, they had not learned to look with indifference. For a moment or two it seemed as if they would have stood the shock; they even cheered, or rather hallooed, after their own discordant fashion, and remained steady; but long before the collision took place, their courage failed them. They faced to the right about, as if by word of command, and ran, though still preserving their line, to the rear. It is but justice to declare, that no set of officers could have exerted themselves more strenuously to check this not disorderly flight. They hurried from post to post, waved their swords over their heads, shouted, seized their men by the collar, and, at last, when the second line was seen advancing to their support, succeeded in checking them. The enemy halted, wheeled round, and once

more opened their fire. Nor did we immediately close upon them. Our own people were out of breath, though still as ardent as ever; and we commanded them to halt, not because they appeared reluctant to go on, but that they might recover their wind. This, however, was soon done; the little gaps in the line were filled up, and again, firing as we proceeded, we pushed against the double line of the enemy. Again was our threatened charge completely successful. Having waited to receive our final volley, the French gave way, and fled, this time, in awful confusion.

At this critical juncture, the French cavalry, which had not hitherto been engaged, dashed round the right of our line, and made a gallant effort to charge the regiments somewhat disordered in pursuit. They were received as they came on with a fire so destructive, that their horses would not face it; and the troopers, in spite of every effort to the contrary, were borne to the rear. Yet these were brave men, the very *élite* of the French army, as their subsequent conduct proved; for, finding that their

chargers were not to be managed, they cast them loose, and returned to the battle on foot.

Whilst the left and centre were thus nobly gathering laurels, the right was no less eminently successful, though brought into collision with the flower of the French infantry, its fifty-first Legère. There, indeed, the action began under circumstances by no means the most promising; for a party of Corsican rangers, which had been sent out to skirmish, gave way almost as soon as attacked; but the British light infantry took no farther notice of the matter, than to hoot, and pour forth execrations upon the fugitives as they passed. They then pressed forward to meet the French, who came on in full confidence of victory. The lines actually met,—some of the men on each side actually crossed bayonets,—but there was no regular push. The French gave way, and were scattered with prodigious slaughter.

The enemy being repulsed at every point, the fire began to slacken, when General Regnier, desperate with his losses, which were truly appalling, and anxious at all risks to redeem the

day, resolved upon one more effort for victory. Whilst his own left and centre gave way beyond the possibility of recall, he moved several battalions whose order still remained, rapidly to the right, with the design of overwhelming, by the weight of a sudden charge, the left of the British army. He so far succeeded as to hinder General Cole's brigade, which was hurrying up to take its station in advance, from forming in a continuous line, and compelling them to throw back the left, at an angle of sixty degrees with the 81st. Nothing daunted by that circumstance, however, the brave grenadiers and 27th opened their fire in the most magnificent manner; and sustained it with an animation, which soon gave General Regnier ground to tremble for the success of his well-arranged plan. But that success was rendered impossible, even more speedily than we could have anticipated, by a coincidence as well-timed as has ever occurred in war.

In describing the embarkation of the little army which sailed from Melazzo, I made mention only of the light company of the 20th regiment. That distinguished corps, though

equally with its light troops destined to share in the honour and hazard of the expedition, had been unavoidably left behind, in consequence of a deficiency of tonnage for its conveyance. The transports, however, had no sooner landed us, than they returned for the 20th and the cavalry, the former of which came up just in time to cover itself with glory, and to decide the fate of the day. Colonel Ross, seeing how matters went, formed his regiment with great presence of mind into several companies in the wood. With these he debouched upon the flank of the assailants, thus placing them between the fires of his own men and the grenadiers; and then with a spirit-stirring shout, which caused the very hills to re-echo, rushed forward. It needed but that war-cry to deprive the enemy of the last remnant of confidence: Without so much as waiting to ascertain from what species of force it proceeded, the appalling cheer no sooner met their ears, than they broke and fled from the field in a state of confusion quite as irremediable, as that into which the other portions of their line had fallen.

Thus ended the battle of Maida; an affair

of small numbers, doubtless, but second in point of brilliancy of execution, and excellence of effect, to none in which a British army has ever been engaged. Though the political results which immediately arose out of it were not great, one admirable purpose it undeniably served,—it established, beyond the possibility of doubt, a truth, of which, in spite of the glorious campaign in Egypt, Europe still doubted. It taught foreign nations that on shore, no less than on the sea—in the field no less than on the quarter-deck—Britons know how to fight, and how to conquer; even though the enemy surpass them in numbers, as much as he may be supposed to surpass them in skill and experience.

It is not necessary for me to describe to you at length, the amount of loss experienced on each side. Enough is done when I state, that whilst ours fell short in killed and wounded of three hundred men, that of the enemy was computed to exceed three thousand, of which thirteen hundred were killed upon the spot, and eleven hundred wounded and made prisoners. All this, however, took place during the action,

for the pursuit was neither very lengthened nor very destructive; indeed, the total absence of cavalry, as well as the exhausted condition of the infantry, rendered pursuit the next thing to impossible. But we were not, therefore, without means of cutting off stragglers, and destroying small parties. The Calabrese, encouraged by our success, rose upon the vanquished, harassing their detachments, and cutting off the fugitives; till the number of prisoners brought in by these allies, amounted to several hundreds. But on such subjects I am not competent to speak, more especially as of the progress of the expedition I saw no more.

CHAPTER VI.

I HAVE said that the French fled with great precipitation, and that our people were so completely overcome by the toil of a severe battle, fought after a night almost of watching under an Italian July sun, that little or no attempt was made to harass them. A few light companies only, with a detachment of Highlanders, followed; but even these failed of producing any important result, rather through the disadvantages under which pursuers always labour, than from the absence of zeal or even speed. The French, as troops defeated generally do, divested themselves of all incumbrances, leaving knapsacks, accoutrements, and even firelocks behind; our men could follow only as soldiers, ready for immediate action. As a matter of

course we were left rapidly behind; though not till several persons on both sides had been wounded by the fire of the covering and pursuing parties. Of that number I was one. Almost the last shot discharged took effect in my left arm; and I was compelled by pain and loss of blood to abandon my company.

I need not pretend to explain to my present auditors how a man feels, either when he is first hit by a ball, or after he is conveyed back to the hospital. A sharp stunning blow, as if it had been given with a heavy club, caused me to stagger, and fairly whirled me round like a feather. For a second or two I so far lost my recollection as to be incapable of guessing at the cause; but a single application of the sound joint to the hurt, set me right in that particular. The bone was fractured; and my useless limb hung like an incumbrance at my side. Yet I did not fall. On the contrary, I grasped the wounded joint tightly; partly with a view to stop the hemorrhage, partly to support it; and then hurried back to the camp with all the speed of which I was capable.

On the first glance at the nature of my hurt,

the surgeon, much to my horror, pronounced that amputation was necessary. I believe that I would have resisted this had either my bodily strength or mental vigour been adequate to resistance; but excruciating pain, accompanied by a parching thirst, deprived me of the power of articulation, and I submitted, without a murmur, to the operation. I retain no distinct recollection of what I felt at the moment. I suppose only that the limb was taken off upon the field, and that as soon as the stump had been dressed, I was removed into a waggon for the purpose of being conveyed back to the coast.

Never shall I forget the torture which the movement of that cumbrous vehicle occasioned; or the shrieks and groans of my companions in misery, who, four in number, occupied it along with me. Neither the infliction of the wound, nor yet the first horrid incision of the amputator's knife, was to be compared with the excruciating pain which followed every jolt; for the roads were rough and uneven, the car was without springs, and the driver, at least not more attentive to the feelings of his cargo than he ought to have been. In this manner we were trans-

ported across one of the fords of the river, the wheels slipping from stone to stone, and the horse floundering through the gravel. But matters improved as soon as we gained the smooth sea beach; over these level sands we rolled on in comparative ease, and reached the shipping, exhausted but not agonized, just as the sun was setting.

I pass by all details of our voyage to Sicily, and of the humane treatment which not I only, but the rest of the wounded, received after our arrival there. At first even the officers were placed in hospitals, that they might be more immediately under the eye of the medical staff; of whose exertions to alleviate their sufferings and recruit their strength, no man who has ever experienced them, can be forgetful. As we became convalescent, however, we were permitted to return to our old quarters, a licence of which no man more gladly availed himself than I ; and I was once more a denizen of my original billet, when my comrades, after a glorious, though not very profitable campaign, rejoined me. That was, as you may well believe, a meeting fraught with no common joy to

all parties, more especially as only three members of the mess were wanting; and the fate of one of these excited at least as much of wonder as regret, because to all except myself it appeared involved in mystery. You have doubtless anticipated the name of the absentee thus alluded to; if not, I may as well inform you that it was Vernon,—whose total disappearance could in no way be accounted for upon any ground of rational conjecture.

When the returns were first given in, it was of course concluded that Captain Vernon was among the number of killed. The strictest search was in consequence made for his body; but though not the field of battle only, but all the thickets and covers near were carefully examined, not a trace of him could be discovered. The next opinion hazarded naturally was, that he had fallen into the hands of the enemy; but besides that our regiment was never so circumstanced as to run the risk of losing any of its members by capture, a flag of truce sent in to the head quarters of General Regnier, for the purpose of ascertaining who had, and who had not been taken,

returned with a report, that no such individual was a prisoner. Every one now became totally at a loss how to account for his disappearance. I alone guessed at the true cause, though even I could have spoken, had I been so disposed, from conjecture only. As to the rest, they seemed willing to credit any rumour, no matter how extravagant or absurd, rather than give credence for a moment to a suspicion of the truth. It is scarcely necessary to add, that I dropped no hint on the subject. Grieved, mortified, perhaps indignant as I was, I would not have so far injured him for worlds; and hence I took care, as often as the topic chanced to be introduced, to join my own to the general cry of amazement and apprehension.

Things had been in this state about a month, and I was so far recovered from my hurt as to appear occasionally at the mess, when an event befell as remarkable of its kind as any in which I have ever been an actor. I was sitting one night in my chamber, ruminating over past occurrences, and indulging in such speculations respecting the future as youths of my age are in the habit of encouraging, when a knock

at my door, so gently given as to be scarcely distinguishable from the nibbling of a mouse, attracted my attention. I listened in silence, doubtful whether imagination had not deceived me, and was preparing, after a considerable pause, to resume my interrupted meditations, when the same cautious knock was repeated. Satisfied now that some one stood without, I walked to the door, and opening it, beheld a figure closely muffled in a cloak, standing upon the threshold. Instinctively I retreated, keeping my eye fixed upon the intruder, at the same time that I stretched forth my hand for my sword; but the figure, be it what it might, did not follow. It made one pace, and only one, in advance, and then gazed around, as if anxious to discover whether I was alone. The latter movement by no means reconciled me to my companion.

"Who are you?" exclaimed I. "And what is your business? Speak! or I will alarm the sentry at the bottom of the yard, and cause you to be arrested."

"Is there any one here besides yourself?" asked the stranger in a disguised voice.

"What is that to you?" cried I. "Explain who and what you are on the instant, or take the consequences."

I moved towards the window as I spoke, when the figure suddenly sprang forward, and casting aside the mantle which had hitherto enshrouded him, displayed the face and form of Vernon. I knew him instantly; but how changed was he since last we sat together in this very apartment, conversing freely and lovingly, like brethren and friends! Pale, haggard, wasted to a shadow, with eyes sunk in their sockets, and cheek-bones sharp and protruding, the miserable man stood before me the very living emblem of ruined hopes and mental distraction.

"You may well stare at me thus," cried he. "You may well doubt the evidence of your own senses; yet they do not deceive you, Section. Once more stands in your presence, the most debased, the most humiliated, the most self-despised and wretched of men. Ay, turn away from me," continued he, as I involuntarily averted my face from his wild yet sorrowful gaze. "It is right that you, and every ho-

nourable man should turn away in disgust and loathing from a coward. I know that there is pollution in the very air that I breathe, which affects, and must affect all, except my miserable self. But you shall not long be blasted by my presence. I came only to see you, that I might heap reproaches on you, and then follow wherever an adverse fate may lead. Section, have you behaved towards me as your professed regard entitled me to expect? Did you not pledge yourself that I should not again turn my back upon the enemy, or if I did, that I should fall? Why is it that I am here? Why do not these accursed limbs sleep beside the brave on the field of Maida?"

"Vernon," said I, after a brief but violent struggle to recover my composure; "you have no right to tax me with behaving towards you otherwise than as the most rigid friendship could require. I ceased not, from the commencement of the advance, to urge upon you the necessity of exertion:—if your courage failed in the moment of trial, how am I to blame?"

"In every way," exclaimed he fiercely. "Were you not solemnly pledged, in case other measures failed, to shoot me through the head?"

"No," replied I, "never! I never made any such improper promise. And if I had, I should have certainly not kept it. Do you look upon me as capable of committing a cold-blooded and deliberate murder."

"Murder!" shrieked the unhappy man, "Call you that murder! It would have been an act of mercy,—of mercy the purest and most disinterested. You would have rid the world at once of a wretch, the print of whose foot insults the very earth, at the same time that you would have delivered me from a load which I cannot otherwise shake off, though I abhor it. Oh, Section, Section! how can I ever forgive you this irreparable injury?"

"My poor unhappy friend," said I, melted almost to tears? "why is it that you permit a disordered imagination thus to hurry you into extravagance? Consider for a moment what I must have felt, had I rashly done as you required, and as you would have me believe that

I promised. But enough of this: tell me whence you have come, what you propose to do, and whither it is your design to proceed."

"I have come," replied he, "from the purlieus of this city, where I have skulked since the return of the wounded from the battle. How I contrived to get on board unnoticed I cannot tell; but for three entire days I lay in the hold of a transport, without tasting a morsel of bread, or moistening my lips with a drop of water. By this means I was conveyed across the Straits, and I have lived with the poorest and meanest of the people, in the disguise of a deserter from the navy, ever since. As to my intentions for the future, what ought they to be? With a name eternally disgraced, and a fortune eternally ruined, what boots it where I go, or how I act? All that I ask is to die,—and to die in any manner except by my own hand, for which I have not courage."

"Then let me convey to you as much of consolation," said I, "as your unfortunate circumstances will allow. Your name is not disgraced—your fortunes are not ruined. Not a human being, except myself, is aware of the

means by which you quitted the field; and even I know these by your own confession, and by it only. A thousand surmises have been formed respecting you; but, as I hope to be saved, no one, as far as I know, has breathed a suspicion to your discredit."

Vernon gazed at me with an expression so bright, so variable, yet so suspicious, as to affect me in a degree not easily described.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed he at last. "Can I credit my own senses? or are you, whom I have so intimately trusted, capable of deceiving me?"

"I do not deceive you," replied I, "as you may discover for yourself, provided you can muster resolution to appear to-morrow on the parade-ground. All that is required of you is to get up some plausible account of your disappearance, and I will answer for your receiving a kind reception from the officers of the regiment."

Vernon's colour went and came rapidly for some moments, during which time he eyed me with a look of peculiar scrutiny from head to foot.

"And how has my name been treated in the returns?" asked he.

"It appeared among the list of missing," answered I.

There was again a silence for a little space; at the conclusion of which, Vernon, having, as it seemed, made up his mind, said—

"No, Section, I cannot, and will not return to the ranks again. The important trial has been made, and it has failed;—it were madness, worse than madness, to repeat it. Yet would I fain retire from the service with a character not wholly destroyed; and would you but promise to keep my secret, so much may be effected. To meet my brother officers face to face, however, and impose upon them a tale which I know to be false, is a task to which I am not competent But I can write to them after my return to England, whither I shall immediately proceed; and if you continue faithful, as you have hitherto been, I may yet, in some other walk of life, become a respectable member of society. You are not rich, I know. Now, to me money is no object,—grant me one favour,

by permitting me to lodge in our agent's hands the price of your company."

To all that Vernon had hitherto said, I listened with patience. I really felt for him as an object deserving pity rather than censure; and there was nothing, inconsistent with my own honour, that I was not prepared to undertake, with a view to forward his wishes; but this last proposal hurt me deeply. It was neither more nor less than an effort on his part to bind me to his cause by ties of pecuniary obligation. My blood boiled as I thought of this.

"Captain Vernon," said I, "you are perfectly correct in supposing that I am a poor man; but you are deceived in me, if you take me for a mean one. The King himself could not bribe me to adopt any line of conduct of which my own conscience did not approve; I neither want, nor will accept of, bribes from such as you."

"Forgive me, Section," exclaimed he, coming forward and holding out his hand, which, in the height of my indignation, I refused to accept, "and do more justice both to yourself and me than suppose that I ever harboured the idea of

bribing you to any thing. It is not so, Heaven is my witness. When I spoke of purchasing a company for you, I alluded only to an act which I have often meditated, but of which no opportunity of speaking has occurred till now. But let that pass. Since you will not accept a favour at my hands, I cannot force it upon you; yet am I despicable enough to implore one at your's. Will you solemnly promise to keep my secret?"

"Most readily," answered I; "I solemnly promise never to betray you whilst I continue a member of this regiment, nor to mention your story in any place, where there can be the smallest risk of your being injured by it."

"A thousand and a thousand thanks," said he, in a tone almost of renewed cheerfulness. "Then even yet I may hold up my head, and my family, at least, will escape the disgrace which I have laboured to bring upon them. And now, farewell, Section! I can scarcely venture to hope that you will continue to think well of one, of whose cowardice you have received proofs so convincing; but when you do

think of me, think at least as much in pity as in anger."

Again he held out his hand, which this time I did not refuse; and then turning briskly round, he hurried into the street.

Of the particulars of Vernon's future history I can give you no account. About two months after our strange meeting, a letter arrived from him, which bore date somewhere in the West of England, and contained a long, and not a badly connected history of his capture by a band of stragglers, and his sufferings from severe wounds. In it he spoke of himself as disabled for future service, his constitution having entirely given way under the privations to which he was subject; and he announced his intention of selling out, as soon as the sanction of the proper authorities could be obtained to the measure. We received no farther communication from him; but the very next file of gazettes informed us, that Lieutenant Such-a-one was to be Captain, by purchase, in the —— regiment of Foot, *vice* Percy Vernon, who had retired.

CAPTAIN SECTION'S narrative was followed, as those of his predecessors had been, with the thanks and good wishes of the party, in which, as the reader may suppose, I was not backward in joining; but my astonishment may be conceived, when the President, after casting a glance of peculiar meaning round the table, thus began:—

"It appears to me, Gentlemen, that after so many details on our parts, we have some claim upon our worthy guest, who has, according to his own admission, seen service, and cannot, therefore, be without a few reminiscences connected with it. With your permission, therefore, I invite him (for here my authority extends not) to take his turn; and I promise him, in the event of his compliance, to wind up with one more chronicle of former times."

It was to no purpose that I protested against being thus taken by surprise, and declared my

absolute inability to recollect, far less to repeat, any tale worthy of attention. There was a universal outcry—"Proceed, proceed; we are not fastidious, as you may easily see." For a short time I struggled against it; but finding that farther opposition would offend, where to offend would have been, in my judgment, to sin, I bethought me of the following adventure among the Pyrenees; and detailed it.

A PYRENEAN ADVENTURE.

A PYRENEAN ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

At the period when the left column of the British army occupied the pass of Irun, the particular regiment of which I was a member, pitched its tents on a sort of platform, or natural terrace, in the side of the Quatracone mountain. The situation of the camp was one of extreme beauty; indeed it was more than beautiful, it fairly deserves to be styled romantic. Sheltered from the rays of the sun by a grove of graceful dwarf-oaks, our background was formed by the bald rocks and giant shapes of the mountain, which, tier above tier, and precipice above precipice, rose in barren majesty into the clouds. On either side of our platform was a ravine: that upon the right, abrupt and

of considerable depth, was darkened both to its base, and to the brow of the opposite hill, by the foliage of a dense forest; that upon the left, more gradual in its declivity, afforded room for a few corn-fields and other cultivated spots, as it sloped away into the level country. In front, again, were the mouth of the pass, the high-road, the Bidassoa, Fontarabia, and the ocean, all of them so hemmed in by the heights of Audaye and San Marcial, as to compose one of the most splendid vistas which it has ever been my good fortune to behold.

Whilst the corps was stationed here, and indeed as often as circumstances would allow, it was my custom to wander away from the camp with a gun over my shoulder, and a dog at my heels, for the double purpose of picking up a little *provend* for the mess, and indulging a spirit of roving and adventure, which was then natural to me. It seldom happened that these excursions proved unproductive of at least temporary gratification. If it came to the worst, and no other advantage arose out of them, they at all events enabled me to become acquainted with some of the grandest and most sublime of

Nature's works; whilst they afforded many opportunities of beholding the dispositions both of our own and of the enemy's army, such as men of more sedentary habits could not possibly obtain. Nor were these the only consequences which attended upon them. On more than one occasion I have found myself thrown into situations upon which even now I cannot look back without experiencing something of the excitement which affected me at the moment. With the circumstances attending one of these excursions, I propose, on the present occasion, to make you acquainted, warning you at the same time, that I possess no powers of description competent to convey any thing like a vivid picture either of my own feelings, or of the events which called them into play.

One fine day towards the end of September, in the year 1813, my faithful Juno and her master set out, in high health and spirits, to pursue their wonted occupation. It happened that an extraordinary pressure both of public and private business had so far occupied my attention throughout the previous week, that I had not been able, during the whole of that

period, to wander once beyond the bounds of the encampment; and as my fondness for liberty and field sports was then neither blunted by time nor stifled by circumstances, the fact that noon had passed ere the breaking up of a court martial set me free to indulge my own inclinations, proved no inducement either to remain at home, or to confine my ramble within narrow and well-ascertained limits. On the contrary, having a great deal of lost time to make good, I considered that by seeking out fresh ground, a better chance would be afforded of success, than if I returned to haunts repeatedly visited before; more especially as these haunts lay at a distance from our position, and were familiarly known to other sportsmen as well as to myself.

I have said, that on the right of the terrace occupied by our tents was a wooded ravine of considerable depth and steepness. At the bottom of that hollow ran a beautiful rivulet, which, after falling from a sort of detached shoulder of the Quatracone, wound onwards through the valley, till it joined the Bidassoa near the ruined bridge. I had often experienced a desire

to trace that stream to its source, partly because I felt satisfied that the labour of the journey would be more than compensated by the magnificence of the scenery to which it must lead, and partly because I longed to shoot one or more of the many eagles, which, from their nests among the cliffs, looked down upon us, as if in anxious expectation of the moment when the fortune of battle should consign us to their talons. This morning I resolved at all hazards to gratify that inclination ; so, striking off by the rear of the camp, I made at once for the waterfall.

I may not so much as attempt a description of the various and magnificent spectacles, which the progress of that toilsome, and occasionally hazardous excursion, from time to time spread out before me. As long as my route conducted up the face of the cliff, from a basin on the summit of which the rivulet tumbled, I could, as often, as I chose to turn round, look down upon towns and villages, corn-fields and meadows, tents and ships, redoubts and cottages ; but from the instant that the ridge was passed, every vestige of human skill and human exer-

tion was shut out. A long, narrow, winding vale lay beneath me; gloomy with forests, apparently trackless, and of the growth of ages; and girdled in by rocks and precipices hurled into every variety of fantastic shape. On either hand, and far off in my front, hill rose above hill, and cone above cone, as if a thousand earthquakes had been at work, or the globe had never, in this corner at least, escaped from a state of chaos. But words are wanting to describe such a panorama. If any of the party can imagine the effect which the wildest combinations of mountain scenery are capable of producing, he may, perhaps, arrive at something like a correct notion of the landscape on which I now gazed; if he be incapable of making this mental exertion for himself, I cannot pretend to assist him in it. It is sufficient to observe, that accustomed as I had been, from childhood, to highland scenery, this perfectly astonished me, insomuch that I remained for several minutes riveted to the spot, from which it first burst upon me. Nor was I more struck by the objects which affected my sense of sight, than by the sort of preternatural stillness which

prevailed. Either the breezes blew not at all, or the trees and shrubs in the valley were entirely sheltered from them; for not a bough or a leaf was in motion. The only sounds, indeed, which reached me, were a sort of indistinct murmur, produced by the water-fall, now many hundred feet below me, and the occasional shrill cry of an eagle, as it sailed over head, at a height which placed it far beyond the reach of danger, from any power except that of the storm.

Having indulged, for some time, the feelings which such a scene was calculated to excite, as well as recovered my breath and rested my limbs, I began to look around for the purpose of ascertaining how I might most easily attain the object of my present ambition, by reaching the top of the mountain. You will understand, that I was now seated upon a sort of sugar-loaf hill, connected on both sides with other hills three or four times more lofty than itself. That upon the right seemed peculiarly rough and uneven; that upon the left, besides that the stream trickled down its surface, was more grassy and accessible; so I resolved to

scale it. But I found, on putting my determination into force, that even it was far from being devoid of difficulties. Projections, which, when viewed from a distance, appeared trifling and easy of ascent, proved when attained to, wholly impervious; whilst the grass itself was in many spots so dry and slippery, as to render it exceedingly hazardous to pass along. Nevertheless I had proceeded too far, to return now. I pushed on, winding round the base of such rocks as I found myself unable to scale, and creeping on all fours, when to walk upright became impossible; and I was rewarded, after two hours and a half of severe labour, by beholding what I took to be the last of the ridges. It was a large perpendicular cone; but there seemed to be a pass, or as an Highlander would call it a Balloch, on one side of it, and to that I directed my steps. I was approaching rapidly to this object of my wishes, when the cry of an eagle, coming, as it appeared to me, from the opposite side of the brow, attracted my attention. In a whisper, I ordered Juno to heel; and putting a ball in one barrel, instead of small shot, I lay down on my belly, and in that posi-

tion dragged myself towards the summit. I gained it with some difficulty; but you may imagine what my feelings were, when, on peeping over the ridge, I beheld in a sort of narrow glen or hollow, the diameter of which could not exceed twenty or thirty yards, the bones and mutilated remains of not fewer than forty or fifty human beings. Upon these some dozen or two of eagles were sitting;—not in the art of gorging, for in truth nothing now remained, upon which they or other carnivorous animals could feed; but scraping and turning the bones about, and with their beaks tearing, as if in mockery, into minute shreds, a few remnants of what had once been military clothing. So little had I anticipated such a spectacle in these wild regions, that surprise, and to a certain extent, horror, completely overcame me. I lay with my finger on the trigger, but abstained from firing, till my dog sprang upon the brow, and the alarmed birds, rising in an instant, escaped.

Less annoyed at having thus permitted my prey to elude me, than curious to ascertain how so many bodies could have come into a

situation so singular, I looked about for some path or sloping declivity, by which I might descend into this place of the dead; but I looked in vain. The skeletons lay in a hole, which I can compare to nothing more nearly than a disused coal-pit of extraordinary dimensions; that is to say, they occupied a spot closed in on three sides by perpendicular rocks. The fourth was, indeed, open, but as far as I could judge, by examining it from my present position, it was open only to a precipice. Having indulged in a few vague conjectures, therefore, and satisfied myself that I could do nothing more, I turned away, and striking off to the right, soon entered the precincts of a thick wood. Here my dog beginning to quest, I had the satisfaction to find that I had at last arrived where game promised to be abundant. She led the way down the side of the mountain,—I followed; and my attention being wholly ingrossed, I went on, sometimes firing with success, at other times missing, till the gradual diminution of light warned me, that it was high time to think of returning to the camp.

If there be a sportsman here, and a keen one,

he will readily comprehend, how a man busied in the pursuit of hares, rabbits, and red-legged partridges, may become wholly unconscious both of the space of ground over which he passes, and the passage of time over his own head. Such, at least, was my case to-day. For the last hour or two I had wandered on, through brake and briar, across hill and valley, without taking any note of my bearings, or of the approach of evening; and now I found myself deserted by the sun at the bottom of a tangled glen, and surrounded on all sides by a pathless forest of cork-trees. To confess the truth, I was very far from being delighted with either my situation or prospects. It failed not to occur to me, that I had ventured within the legitimate territories of wolves and bears; and that as darkness came on, they were not unlikely to resent so bold an intrusion; for aught I knew, the enemy's out-posts might be close at hand; and above all, there was the risk, in case I should venture to seek my way back in the dark, of falling over some one of the numerous precipices, which lay, as I well knew, between me and the camp. The idea that my game-bag

was filled, hardly sufficed to compensate for these gloomy reflections. But though I sincerely repented of my rashness, and wished myself a thousand times safe and sound in my tent, I by no means lost heart. On the contrary, resolving that no efforts should be wanting on my part, let the consequences be what they might, I gladly took advantage of the slight remains of twilight which still glimmered; and turning my face, as well as I could guess, in the direction of Irun, I strode forward.

But the progress which I had made in this random journey was slight indeed, when a thousand obstacles, of which the rapidly increasing darkness constituted not the least, compelled me to pause. There was no longer light sufficient to distinguish objects at three yards before me; the underwood became more and more rough, and the ground more and more broken; till at last all hope of escape from the labyrinth left me. I now looked around for a convenient spot in which I might spend the night: not indeed free from apprehension that if I slept, it would be to awake in the clutch of some wild beast, but determined to keep awake as long

as possible, and trust the rest to Providence. On my dog I knew that I could rely as a vigilant guardian; and I hoped, with the assistance of my double-barrelled gun, to repel any attack that might be made upon me.

I had arrived at this determination, and was preparing to act in accordance with it, when a couple of chance paces taken to the right brought me, to my no small delight, upon a beaten foot-path. Thanking Heaven with all my heart, I at once determined to follow it, let it lead where it might; so I pushed on, though perfectly conscious that I was increasing my distance, at every step, from the tents of my regiment.

I had proceeded thus, as near as I could guess, about a mile and a half, when the wood ending, I found myself at the corner of a bare green hill, and in the gorge of a valley. It was not, however, without a sense of serious apprehension, that I discovered signs of the valley being occupied. A strong light issued from the doorless apertures and broken roof of a ruined cottage a few hundred yards off; and the sound of many voices, distinctly heard in

the stillness of evening, gave proof that the ruin in question was filled with people. Who were they?—that was the question which demanded an answer. If Frenchmen, as was by no means improbable, death or captivity would reward my farther progress. If Spaniards!—I did not relish that idea much more keenly than the other; for I well knew, that Spanish Guerillas were seldom very scrupulous when plunder fell in their way. Nevertheless, I resolved to advance at all risks. I did so, my dog keeping close to my heel, and moving, like her master, in profound silence, till the challenge of a sentinel, whom I had not observed, arrested my steps. "Now, then," thought I, "it only remains for me to sell my life at as dear a rate as possible." I cocked my gun, and stood still. The man challenged again, and I recognised the broad full dialect of a Biscayan. I answered without farther delay; upon which the man commanding me to halt, shouted aloud, and in a moment the picket was under arms. It was soon discovered that I was alone; I was permitted to advance, and having satisfied my captors that I was an

English officer, they conducted me, with much civility, into the house. The officer, however, being absent to arrange his sentries, they could neither furnish me with a guide, nor permit me to depart alone; but they offered me a snug place beside their fire, made no attempt to deprive me of my weapon, and kindly supplied me with what was probably the sole refreshment which they had to offer—a segar. I was not displeased with this treatment, but sat contentedly enough among them, till their commander arrived.

This person, on whose entrance they all rose, was a young man of very peculiar and striking appearance. His hair and mustachios, like those of Spaniards in general, were coal-black, and his complexion was of that deep olive hue, which the faces of men much exposed to the sun and winds of a southern climate usually obtain. But there was a brightness and penetration in his eye which pierced through the individual on whom it rested; and a strong expression of daring—I might almost call it ferocity, overspread his whole countenance. In stature he did not greatly exceed the

middle size, if indeed he exceeded it at all; but his well-knit limbs, full chest, and broad shoulders, indicated a surpassing degree of bodily strength and activity. His dress, too, was abundantly picturesque. A brown cloak, buckled round the neck, fell so far over one shoulder, as to expose a rich green uniform beneath it, whilst appended to an embroidered belt, in which, by the way, were stuck a brace of steel-mounted pistols, hung a sabre of unusual size and weight. On his head he wore a richly laced foraging-cap; a pair of tan-leather boots encased his legs; and to complete his resemblance rather to a robber-chief than a soldier, he carried a short rifle over his right shoulder. I have seldom seen a better subject for a painter than the whole group presented by the light of a large fire of wood.

The Spanish officer stopped short the instant he beheld me, and fixing a keen and half-suspicious glance upon me, demanded my quality and business. I informed him on both heads at once, explaining that I had been overtaken by darkness when shooting in the woods hard by, and considered myself fortunate in having

arrived at a place, from whence a guide might be procured, or, at least, shelter obtained for the night.

"May I believe this fine tale?" said he, in a tone of voice which I was far from relishing. "Here you are, within half-musket shot of the enemy's lines, professing to have lost your way in an attempt to reach Irun."

I could only reply by repeating my assertion, and by reminding him, that I was quite ignorant of the very points of the compass amid these mountains.

The Spaniard was silent for a moment, and then said: "You are an Englishman, I perceive; and the English are in general honest, as well as brave; but there may be traitors even among them. Perhaps you are one; perhaps you designed to desert to the enemy."

Indignant beyond measure at this allegation, I would have picked a quarrel with him on the spot, had not a single glance round the room sufficed to convince me, that such a measure could end only in my own destruction. I repelled it, however, in such a way, as to show him, that he had seriously wounded my feel-

ings; nor was the hint lost upon him. His suspicions appeared to subside, and motioning to me to resume my seat, he put several other questions to me, in more friendly language. At length he became satisfied, and desired to know my wishes. I replied, that I required only a guide as far as the camp above Irun, and that I would cheerfully compensate the person who undertook the office. He then said something, not very courteously, it is true, about abiding where I was till morning; but on my declining the invitation, he did not press it. A non-commissioned officer, whom he named Manillo, was accordingly commanded to see me safe; and without having either given, or received a salute from this discourteous warrior, I withdrew. Before going, however, I pulled out a hare and a couple of rabbits from my bag, and gave them to the soldiers,—a present for which these poor fellows appeared exceedingly thankful.

CHAPTER II.

My guide and I continued our journey for some time in silence, till at last, my mind being full of the remarkable appearance, and no less remarkable behaviour of the Spanish officer, I asked him whether or not he knew any thing of his history?

"Yes, Sir," replied the man; "I know it all, as well I may; for we were both born in this very valley, and have been friends from our cradles."

"In this valley!" replied I; "did you say in this valley? and that you have been friends from infancy?"

"Even so," answered Manillo, "and might have gone farther; I might have added that

we were brothers, for Francisco was to have married my sister. Was to have married?—He did marry her, though the hell-hounds tore the marriage-tie asunder."

My curiosity was now excited to the highest pitch, and I entreated my companion to gratify it. He complied, though not without the endurance of considerable pain; and the following are the outlines of the story which he told me.

"You see these ruined cottages below us," said he: "they are all that remains of the homes of our fathers." I looked where the soldier pointed; and with the help of the stars which now shone out, beheld eight or ten huts in the hollow beneath. "And now look up," continued my conductor, just as we reached the bottom of a deep cut, or rather an old water-course, in the side of the hill—"Do you observe that high rock, not far from the summit of the mountain." I gazed upwards, and saw distinctly enough a bold bare cliff, projecting from amid a thick forest of underwood. A strange idea crossed my mind at this moment, and I hastily asked whether there were not a deep hollow beyond the precipice? He as-

sented. "And it is full of human bones," continued I. "Aha!" exclaimed the Spaniard, "have you seen them? Then," added he, violently raising his clenched fist in the air, "you have looked upon the bones of those who butchered our fathers and our children, and violated and murdered our wives and sisters. But you shall hear all.

"Three years have hardly elapsed since the cottages which I lately pointed out to you, were inhabited by eight as poor, but as contented families, as are to be found in Spain. We had no laws, yet there was not a dishonest person amongst us; and, instead of a magistrate, we looked up to and obeyed Senor Albarcho, because he was the oldest and wisest member of the community. Senor Albarcho, you must know, was the father of our present Captain Francisco, and a better man never walked the earth. We had our priest likewise, one of ourselves, whom we all reverenced and respected. Our business was to tend a few goats, which we all had in common; to cultivate a few fields, the fruits of which we shared in common; to hunt bears and chamois, and to make one

another comfortable. We were completely shut out from the rest of the world; but that we never regretted, for our priest told us, and we believed him, that there was no real good in the world of which we were not already possessed.

"You will easily believe, that persons thus situated felt rather like the members of one family, than the inhabitants of the same village; indeed, we composed, properly speaking, but one family: that is, we all married among ourselves, and so became connected by ties of blood, as well as of friendship. Well, Sir, an attachment had long subsisted between Francisco and my sister Amanté, and the 8th of June, 1810, was fixed for the wedding-day. We were not ignorant that at this time the country swarmed with foreign troops,—we had even hesitated, more than once, whether we were not bound, as true Spaniards, to take up arms for their expulsion; but our father, as we called Senor Albarcho, protested strongly against it, and we could not go in opposition to his will. We accordingly remained at peace; and as no soldiers came near us, we gradually ceased to

believe that King Ferdinand was really driven from his throne.

"I told you that the 8th of June was fixed as the wedding-day of Francisco and Amante. We all accompanied them to church, heard them receive the priest's benison, and followed them home; where the remainder of the morning, and some portion of the afternoon, were devoted to sports and merriment. Oh, what an interruption to that mirth took place! We had spread out our supper under the chestnut-tree before the bridegroom's door, and were making ready to partake of it, when the sudden appearance of armed men at the bottom of the valley threw us into the greatest alarm. The women fled into the house; the old men stood irresolute, and the young ran for their rifles. But the hand of God was upon us. These were Frenchmen, Sir, — bloody, barbarous Frenchmen, who had discovered our peaceful retreat, and came to destroy it for ever. I cannot go on,—imagine what followed, if you can. The miscreants sprang upon our women and our goods; we were too feeble, and too few, successfully to oppose them; and we heard

in our retreat shrieks to which we could not reply, and wailings which we could not soothe."

The Spaniard became here so violently agitated, that his very voice failed him; but recovering his self-command in a few minutes, he proceeded:—

"Nothing now remained for us, but vengeance. We betook ourselves, eighteen in number, to the neighbouring fastnesses, and choosing Francisco for our leader, we became Guerillas. But we went not beyond the precincts of our own valley. No; our cry, day and night, was for vengeance, and to obtain it, we hovered round the ruins of our houses, like beasts of prey. Not a Frenchman strayed from his cantonments who returned alive; and many and many a time have we roused the whole band from their unholy slumbers with our war-shout. Exasperated at this behaviour, the miscreants completed the bloody work which they had begun. Every male, and every aged female, who fell into their hands, perished on the first day; now they butchered, and threw out to us, our wives and little ones. But there was mercy in this; for how could

we again receive those whom the dogs had defiled?

"You have seen the hollow on the top of that rock. It is called the Fuente; for tradition says, that it was once a small lake, and that the ravine, across which we passed, was the channel of the river that flowed from it. I know not whether there be truth in this, but its situation is one of the most remarkable in all these districts. You observed how it is enclosed on three sides; on the fourth, there is a fall of many feet; and the rocks stretching out on either hand beyond the fall, render it perfectly inaccessible. At one corner, however, it is separated from the mountain by a chasm of little more than eighteen feet in width: we laid a narrow bridge of plank over the chasm, and made the old lake our fortress. From this point we were in the daily habit of sallying out upon the enemy; and at last we made it the scene of a glorious revenge.

At the suggestion of our leader, we determined, if it were possible, to lure the monsters into our den, and to destroy them there. For

this purpose, we laboured hard at a huge rock, which hung immediately over our bridge, till we had so loosened it, as that a push from the arm of a child would roll it down the gulf. That being effected, we proceeded to carry the rest of our scheme into execution, thus. One morning, as usual, we rushed down upon the valley, and having maintained a skirmish rather longer and more animated than usual, the blood-hounds were so enraged as to pursue us up the hill. As soon as we reached the forest, all except Francisco, who was the object of their bitterest hatred, avoided the old channel, and escaped into the woods. Francisco, affecting to be wounded, made for the bridge. He crossed, and forty-five of the miscreants, including their commander, followed. This was all that we desired. Instantly the crag fell, and striking the planks exactly in the middle, it dashed them down into the abyss, cutting off all hope of escape from those within the Fuente.

"In the mean while we had taken our stations on the ridges, and looked down in savage exultation upon our prey. For Francisco we

feared nothing, because we knew his intention; and we shouted aloud in order to give him an opportunity of carrying it into effect. We were successful. Whilst the Frenchmen, paralysed with horror, were gazing upwards upon the death which hung over them, Francisco, uttering a loud cry, ran towards the chasm, and with one desperate bound, cleared it. Oh, Sir, had you seen the expression of the murderers' countenances then; had you beheld their uplifted hands, and heard their scream for mercy, your blood would have boiled within you, as mine boils now. Our captain answered them. "Mercy!" cried he, "ay, such mercy as ye granted. Look down, fiends, upon the village ye have destroyed! behold the bodies of the aged and the feeble whom ye have butchered! listen to the cry of those whom ye have violated!—and now take your reward." This was the signal, and we opened our fire upon them. It was in vain that they ran from side to side, seeking for a place of shelter or escape, or reached the brink of the chasm in hopeless despair. Three wretches only tried the leap, and they were dashed to pieces. The rest died,

one after another, as our bullets took effect; and we left them where they fell, that their bones might bleach in the rains of heaven, after their flesh should have been devoured by the eagles."

The Spaniard here ended his story, and to my astonishment I found that we were already in the camp. I offered him money, but he refused it: indeed he seemed like one beside himself with the recollection of the scenes which he had been describing. Having satisfied me that I was at home, he abruptly turned away, and I could hear the boughs and leaves crash before him, as with the speed of a racehorse he rushed down the glen.

My entertainers were a great deal too polite, not to lavish upon me more than a common share of the plaudits of which they were so liberal. These I of course received at their full and legitimate value; but that which gratified me most of all, was the promptitude with which our excellent President redeemed the pledge which he had voluntarily given. Without a moment's pause, or a single sentence of preface, he entered at once upon the following history of The Rivals.

THE RIVALS.

THE RIVALS.

CHAPTER I.

It was on a fine April morning in the year 1776, that the 71st regiment, otherwise called Fraser's Highlanders, in which I bore a commission, began to assemble in heavy marching order in the Tron-gate of Glasgow. Though embodied little more than a month, and as a necessary consequence, at once incomplete in its equipments and totally undrilled, such was the urgency of affairs in the Colonies, and so great the difficulty found in raising men, that the corps had been already for a full fortnight under orders for embarkation; and on the morning to which I allude, it held its muster, for the purpose of proceeding to Greenock, where transports lay ready to receive it. You are,

doubtless, aware that at this period of our history, Highland regiments were enrolled, not by the modern system of recruiting for general service, but at the call of particular persons whose influence in particular districts was great. The same system which brought together the Black Watch and other distinguished Scottish corps, prevailed in the instance of which I am now speaking. Fraser of Lovat, the chief of the clan Fraser, received from His Majesty's government a commission to embody a regiment; he applied for, and obtained the assistance of several other gentlemen, intimate friends of his own, and hereditary allies of his house; and he addressed himself to the task, not only with alacrity, but with perfect confidence of success. He was the less doubtful on the present occasion, because twenty years previously, when labouring under the ban of confiscation, and a beggar in consequence of his father's politics, he had found no difficulty, from the mere influence of his name, in calling together fifteen hundred as fine fellows as ever handled musket; and now that his estates were restored to him, and he took again his natural place in the country,

there was slender probability that his wishes would not be obeyed, at least as cheerfully as before. Lovat was not deceived in his estimation, either of his own personal weight, or of the feelings of his clan. Though the warrant to enlist men did not reach him till late in February, an immediate communication was opened between him and his friends; and before the middle of April two thousand three hundred and forty Highlanders answered to his call, and were regularly enrolled under his standard.

Than the regiment thus raised, as it were, at a moment's warning, it would not be easy to point out a finer body of men. Undisciplined they doubtless were; but if youth, strength, activity, hardihood, courage the most daring, and patience the most exhaustless, are the requisites for making soldiers, Fraser's Highlanders possessed them all in an eminent degree. Nor were these the only particulars in which that fine body of men excelled. The recruits being drawn principally from the lands of four or five individuals, they were almost all familiarly known to one another; and they entertained for one another a strong personal regard, which

is never without its use in active warfare. Moreover, care was taken to place them under the command of officers, either natives of the same districts with themselves, or known as intimates of their chiefs. Thus one company, raised exclusively from the estate of Lochiel, had at its head Charles Cameron, the eldest son of the chief; another, gathered partly from Glencoe, partly from Appin, was commanded by Macdonald the younger; whilst Chisholm of Chisholm, Macleod of Macleod, and Mackintosh of Mackintosh, were each severally at the head of divisions composed exclusively of their own clansmen. It is not necessary to add, that throughout the ranks of a regiment thus held together, over which military law exerted hardly any influence, its place being far more efficaciously supplied by personal feeling, the noblest spirit prevailed. The honour or dishonour of the corps was felt to implicate the honour or dishonour of every man and officer attached to it; nor was there any thing which these brave men would not have attempted, few things that they would not have accomplished, to advance the one, and guard against the other. It may

not, perhaps, be unacceptable, if I give you an instance of the kind of sentiment that pervaded them,—though I confess that the anecdote has nothing whatever to do with the subject of my tale.

Young Lochiel, previous to the arrival of the route, had been called to London on private business; and was there seized with a severe illness, which threatened to prev enthis accompanying his followers on board of ship. When the route came, and the regiment was paraded for marching, there arose all at once, in Lochiel's company, a clamour wholly inexplicable,—the men being violently agitated as if some grievous personal wrong had been put upon them. By great good fortune Lovat himself was on the ground, and being a man of singular temper, as well as intimately acquainted with the dispositions of Highlanders, he set himself calmly to the task of inquiring into the cause of the tumult. It was soon explained. Cameron's company positively refused to budge an inch from their ground, till their hereditary leader directed them. They were Lochiel's men; they had followed him, as their fathers had followed his

fathers, and they were prepared to accompany him through the world;—but to no other person would they pay obedience, were it demanded even by King George himself. Lovat saw at once, that it was only by kind treatment, and manly expostulation, that such feelings were to be dealt with. He addressed the mutineers in their own language, stated fully whence it arose that Lochiel was absent, and assured them that they could not more effectually gratify their chief, than by obeying the orders of their Colonel, and following their comrades. There was an old man, the father of three of Lochiel's soldiers, on the ground, who had travelled from his native hills to bid his sons farewell. He listened, like his younger clansmen, with great attention, to General Fraser's address; and at its conclusion stepped up to the speaker, whom he shook familiarly by the hand. "Simon," said he in a loud tone, so as to be heard by the whole company, "you are a good soldier, and speak like a man; so long as you live, Simon of Lovat will never die." The effect was electrical. The men instantly returned to their duty; and having requested and obtained that

they should be commanded by a near relation of Lochiel, they took their places in the column with perfect readiness. It is but justice to add, that though their beloved young chief never rejoined them, his life having fallen a sacrifice to the malady with which he was afflicted, no company in the regiment from that time forward did its duty better, or, when brought into the field, was more distinguished for its gallantry, or more prodigal of the best blood that composed it. But to return to my story.

Among the numerous instances of personal attachment which a corps thus constituted may be supposed to exhibit, there was none more remarkable, nor productive of effects more striking, than that concerning which I am now going to make mention. In the company to which I was attached, there were two young men, each bearing the name of Allen Macdonald, though in no respect, as far as I am aware, related to one another. These youths, whom, according to Highland fashion, it was customary to distinguish by a surname taken from the peculiarities of their personal appearance, were both of them natives of the romantic district of

Glencoe; the shielings in which they first saw the light stood but a short bow-shot apart; and the lads being of the same age, and addicted to the same pursuits, had been playfellows and companions from their childhood. We may talk of the love which brother bears for brother, in terms as exaggerated as we choose to employ. We may persuade ourselves, if we will, that there cannot be a tie more tender, than that which binds a parent to his child, or a child to his parent; but sure I am that neither brother, parent, nor child, ever felt for the object of its obligatory regard, the absolute devotion of heart and soul and principle, which these friends experienced the one for the other. Allen Dhu knew not what it was to conceal a thought, or a wish, or a feeling, from Allen Roy; Allen Roy had no interests apart or distinct from those of Allen Dhu:—in a word, if ever friendship the firmest and most disinterested subsisted between men, it did so between these two children of the Black Mount.

Having informed you of the mode by which the old 71st was officered, it is scarcely necessary to add, that the utmost care was

taken to interfere as little as might be with the partialities and prepossessions of the men. As a matter of course, Allen Dhu and Allen Roy were comrades; for which, indeed, nature had in some degree fashioned them; the former being just so much taller than the latter, as that the one stood in the front rank, whilst the other covered him: and they occupied, after their arrival in Glasgow, the same chamber in the house where a portion of the corps was billeted. There they remained, esteemed by their fellow soldiers, and respected by the towns-people, during the interval that elapsed between the embodying of the regiment, and its march to Greenock; and seldom has the value of human friendship been put to a severer test, than the events arising out of that sojourn applied.

It happened that there dwelt under the same roof with them a remarkably pretty and attractive girl, the eldest daughter of their host, by name Helen Shaw. With that maiden both the Highland recruits fell in love; and both did their best, as it was natural that they should, to make an impression upon her heart. Whether

it was that the one suspected the other of having the same object in view with himself, yet was unwilling to inquire into the grounds of his suspicion; or whether the natural shyness which in such cases keeps men silent, operated upon them in its customary way, I know not. One thing, however, is quite certain, that for the first time in their lives, the friends forbore from opening their minds to one another, and avoided, as if there had been a penalty attached to it, all mention of their designs respecting Helen. On the contrary, they affected to speak, not slightingly, for of a deceit so palpable both were incapable, but jocosely and carelessly of the maiden, as often as her name chanced to be introduced,—whilst each flattered himself that his real sentiments could be known only to Helen and himself.

I have said nothing as yet of the personal appearance of the rivals,—nor will many words be necessary to supply that deficiency. Allen Dhu was, as his name denotes, of a clear olive complexion. In person he was tall, well formed, light, active, but slender; and his features, if not critically beautiful, were such as few women

would regard except with admiration. A profusion of black and glossy hair overshadowed a forehead white, high, and commanding, whilst his eyes, of the darkest hazel, seemed equally capable of flashing into anger and melting into love. Allen Roy, again, was remarkably fair; blue eyes, hair of a light auburn, with features whose chief attraction lay in their general expression, rather than in their regularity, pointed him out as a descendant rather of some Norwegian stock than as a genuine Celt; whilst his figure, less tall than that of his namesake, but far more muscular, seemed made for extraordinary exertions both of strength and activity. To say the truth, they were, after their particular fashions, two as fine-looking lads as frequently belong to their station in life. Their ages were the same, barely one and twenty; and it is not to be wondered at if the object of their choice hesitated, or appeared to hesitate, for some time between them.

I do not know to what the circumstance is to be attributed, whether to his more steady devotion, or to the greater facility with which he contrived to make himself understood, but at

the end of some fortnight's or three weeks' courtship, Helen Shaw declared in favour of Allen Dhu. Great was Allen's joy when first this confession was wrung from her; and for many hours afterwards his feelings were too much ingrossed by it to permit his giving a thought to any thing besides. But he had not long enjoyed his triumph ere the altered manner of his comrade showed him that his own happiness was to be secured only at the expense of the happiness of his friend. I cannot tell whether he really gave credit to Allen Roy's asseverations of absolute indifference towards Helen. I am inclined, however, to believe that he did not; though he might probably imagine that the passion which was thus lightly spoken of, could not be very violent, and the step which he took was doubtless designed not more in justice towards Helen, than with a view of satisfying his comrade at once of the perfect hopelessness of his suit. Be this, however, as it may, he no sooner parted from Helen, than he hurried off to communicate to his friend the particulars of the interview which had just taken place; and he did so with the abruptness and energy which

characterizes the language of mountaineers, when speaking under the influence of violent passion. Allen Roy heard him out without seeking to interrupt him. Once or twice, indeed, his cheek flushed, and he shifted his position, as men are accustomed to do when painful and unlooked-for intelligence reaches them; but, except by this, and an occasional grinding of the teeth, he exhibited no signs of agitation, far less of hostility. But when Allen Dhu ceased, his struggle to appear calm could no longer be concealed, and he spoke out with an energy which set all control at defiance.

"Allen," said he, "I have loved you from the cradle, as the eagle loves her eirie on the top of Bochiel, or the deer the pleasant pastures among the wilds of Glenorchie. Your wishes have been my wishes, your thoughts my thoughts; when I saw you happy, I was happy also; when you were miserable, nothing could give me comfort. I did not think the day would ever come when I should be compelled to say I envy you your prosperity. But that black hour is upon us now. You love, and are beloved in return—I love also; but

there is no return of love for me. The maiden whose love has been the beacon of all my hopes, has given her heart, and will give her hand to you; and I must live a solitary wretch, to curse the moment that ever I beheld her."

Allen Dhu was powerfully overcome, as his friend thus addressed him.

"Brother of my adoption," cried he, "talk not thus. Read my heart, and learn how I doat upon Helen: the very air that I breathe is not so dear to me as she; but never shall it be said that Allen Dhu thought of his own happiness only, when that of his friend was at stake. Allen, I renounce her for ever. She is yours,—go to her, plead your cause with her, and tell her that I sent you."

"Never, never!" exclaimed the other. "Let this heart break, but never shall my brother make such a sacrifice as this. No, Allen; forgive me that I received your communication so unworthily,—and bear with me a little longer, till the bitterness of grief pass away; but do not, do not insult my friendship by proposing terms, which you would not hear me propose to you—which you know that I cannot accept. I will abandon your society for a time,

till reason resume her sway again; and all that I entreat of you is, not to forget me, whilst thus estranged from you."

The friends here embraced with an intensity of sorrow, such as few men, perhaps, but themselves could have experienced on such an occasion. In accordance with the determination expressed in the above speech, they applied, though not without a pang of extreme bitterness, to be parted: and Allen Roy, by his own choice, was in consequence removed into another company. For a little while the apparent coolness between them created a good deal of speculation in the regiment. Men wondered what ground of quarrel could have arisen between persons who had never been known to exchange so much as an angry word; and numerous and groundless were the conjectures hazarded, as to an occurrence so unlooked for. The marriage of Allen Dhu, however, which took place soon afterwards, if it did not exactly serve as an explanation, at all events presented ground for certain shrewd suspicions which were very freely indulged in. The friends had, without doubt, been rivals. Living under the same roof, and

enjoying the same means of access to the object of their common affection, it was to be expected that the one should feel deeply any little preference shown to the other; whilst such an issue to their rivalry as had actually occurred, could hardly fail of causing an open rupture. Thus thought, and thus reasoned, the soldiers in general; and it is but just to allow, that their conclusion was drawn from no extravagant premises. But ordinary men could not know, because they had never experienced the kind of tie which held the friends together. Quarrel there was none,—of coldness both were incapable; they still loved one another with an extravagance of attachment rarely to be found, and would have still laid down their lives, each to secure the welfare of the other. If they avoided all intercourse beyond that which necessity required, the measure was dictated by prudence and stern duty alone. But time and circumstances, which work changes in all things, operated with full vigour upon them; and the order to embark for foreign service, placed them once more upon their old footing of familiar intimacy.

CHAPTER II.

THE event which more immediately restored these young men to their original footing of intimacy was this. When the regiment came to be told off for active service, it was found that two compact battalions, of nine hundred bayonets each, would prove far more manageable, and, as a necessary consequence, more useful in the field, than a single corps of greater numerical strength, but unwieldy from its excess of numbers. To complete these, the ablest-bodied men were of course carefully selected; and both Allen Dhu and Allen Roy being of the number, they were paraded, as indeed they desired to be, with the service companies; but they were in different battalions. Having already been separated at their own express desire, it was supposed by General

Fraser and his officers, that such an arrangement would be acceptable to them; and it was adopted as a matter of personal favour, rather than as a measure dictated by general expediency. Never was a more mistaken idea entertained. So long as they retained the power of resuming their ancient habits whenever the cause which produced a temporary deviation from them should cease to operate, the friends were well enough pleased to continue an estrangement which they believed to be for the benefit of both; but now that their separation was about to become compulsory, perhaps eternal, their case assumed a widely different appearance.

It happened that the regiment was drawn up that morning in three separate bodies; the two service battalions being in parallel columns, whilst the depôt, or reserve, occupied a position apart. Allen Dhu and Allen Roy, each stood on the flank of his company. They were so placed as to command a full view of one another; and it appeared as if that event alone were wanting to restore to full activity the feelings which had for some time back slumbered. For

a moment or two after the word "attention" was given, the friends seemed to struggle against nature. They obeyed the voice of the commanding officer, and gazed steadily, and as it were violently, to the front; but their efforts were fruitless. At the same instant, and as if they had acted by a preconcerted signal, they threw their muskets upon the ground; in defiance of every thing like military decorum and subordination, their ranks were abandoned, and Allen Dhu and Allen Roy, rushing into the space between the two columns, were immediately folded in each other's arms. It was not surprising that every officer and man on the ground should be sensibly affected. Even the Colonel, to whom the particulars of their case had been communicated, hardly strove to conceal his emotions; and so far from chiding the men for their proceeding, spoke kindly and generously to them. I need scarcely detail the result. Allen Dhu and Allen Roy became from that moment re-united in person as they had ever been in heart, and the latter assumed his old post, in his old company, as the comrade, or covering file of the former.

It is not necessary to offer any more detailed description of the circumstances which attended that memorable parade. Let it suffice to state, that these differed but little from those which usually attend the muster of regiments which assemble for similar purposes; with this exception only, that very few among our men being married, and all of them young, gallant, and careless, no such heart-rending scenes as sometimes offer, were brought before us. At that period, likewise, Government was less strict than it now is, in awarding an exact proportion of women to each battalion; and hence, almost every married soldier was permitted, I say not how wisely, to carry his wife along with him even upon service. But had the case been otherwise, the most exact regulations would not have affected us, our whole number falling considerably short of six to each company; and the consequence was, that when the word was at last given to march, the column set forward, without one painful occurrence having cast a damp upon our spirits.

No event of the slightest moment occurred during the prosecution of our journey from

Glasgow to Greenock. The distance, being little more than twenty miles, was felt as nothing by a band of hardy mountaineers, accustomed, almost every day of their lives, to traverse twice that space, over ground infinitely more difficult; and the waggons and cars keeping well up with the rear, both the baggage and women came in almost as soon as the troops. Every thing, moreover, was conducted with a degree of order and regularity not universal in such cases. Of drunkenness, not a solitary instance took place; indeed, it is no more than justice to the Highland soldiery to avow, that a more temperate body of men exists not; and as care had been taken to provide an adequate supply of billets beforehand, all were speedily directed where to find lodgings. I do not believe that an hour elapsed after the halt of the column in the high street, before every man attached to it was in possession of his quarters for the night.

We found Greenock in a state of great bustle and confusion, the town being crowded with soldiers and seamen, and the harbour and roadstead covered with transports, victuallers, store-

ships, and vessels of war. I need scarcely remind you that, at the period to which my story refers, the troubles in North America had risen to an alarming height. No longer satisfied to oppose the operation of Acts of Parliament by means, if not constitutional, at all events comparatively harmless, the Colonists had at last come to the resolution of making an appeal to arms, and a civil war, with all its attendant horrors and atrocities, was begun. The skirmish of Lexington having been fought, Boston was placed in a state of blockade, which the sanguinary affair of Breed's Hill had not sufficed to raise. In Virginia, the Governor had been compelled to abandon his capital, and seek shelter on board of ship; the Carolinas, the Jerseys, with the whole of New England, were in open rebellion. New York itself was infected by the same spirit, and the very Canadas were in danger. An armed party, under the guidance of Allen and Arnold, had made themselves masters of Ticonderoga, from which point they were said to meditate an inroad as far as Quebec; and, which was the most alarming matter of the whole, every thing appeared to be conduct-

ed with the strictest attention to form and regularity. These were not the mere ebullitions of popular feeling, violent for a time, but of brief endurance. Deputies from no fewer than thirteen states had assembled in Congress at Philadelphia, to whom the duties of government were formally committed by their constituents; and one of the first declarations which they emitted, was to the effect that, America having assumed the sword, would never lay it aside till all her wrongs were redressed. Such proceedings were not without their due effect upon the British ministry. They discovered at last, what might have been surmised from the beginning, that half measures would produce no good effect; and they came to the wise resolution of pouring a large army into the revolted colonies. It was with this design that they caused the force to assemble at Greenock, of which Fraser's Highlanders formed a part; and the whole waited only for a change of wind to proceed upon their destination.

Some days elapsed ere the state of the weather, and the inattention of those whose business it was to see the fleet properly supplied for so

long a voyage, permitted the troops to embark. During this period I was too much occupied in attending to affairs of my own, to pay much attention to the proceedings either of the young couple or their friend; but I ascertained that between them and Allen Roy the utmost cordiality prevailed, and that the bride was rapidly becoming, as indeed she deserved to be, a prodigious favourite with the soldiers in general. Young, quick, and possessed of an excellent ear, she made great progress in the Gaelic language,—a circumstance which was not without its weight in securing for her the good will of Highlanders; and as her temper was as sweet as her manners were lively and innocent, esteem gradually ripened into cordial affection. Helen was not insensible of this, nor indifferent to it; few persons, however circumstanced, are indifferent to the good opinion of their neighbours, yet I question whether it added in any important degree to her previous happiness. She adored her husband; she regarded him as the first of human beings; and she loved others only in proportion as they appeared rightly to value him. Under these circumstances it was

impossible for her to refuse her most unreserved intimacy to her discarded lover. What though he had been a suitor once, was he not the friend of her Allen? and would her Allen throw her into the society of one, in whom he reposed not the utmost confidence? The thing could not be. She would forget that Allen Roy ever addressed her in other language than that of friendship, and treat him, as she was sure he deserved to be treated, like a brother. She did so, and never had she cause, even for a moment, to repent of the measure. Allen Roy seemed to have entirely overcome the passion which once tormented him; or rather, passion seemed to have given place to the purest and most disinterested esteem; and the three lived upon such terms, as will be found to exist only in the bosoms of families the members of which are unusually united and forbearing one towards another.

In the mean while preparations were going on, if not rapidly, at all events very surely, for the reception of the troops on board the fleet. Fresh provisions were purchased, live stock laid in, bread, flour, wine, and other necessaries,

committed to the charge of the ship's stewards; after which, to the inexpressible satisfaction of all concerned, the Blue Peter was displayed at the Commodore's fore topmast. This, as I need not remind you, was the signal for immediate embarkation; and the top-sails being thrown loose at the same moment, no time was lost in obeying it. We marched immediately to the beach, our baggage and stores having been previously stowed away, and boats being there in readiness to receive us, the troops were conveyed, division by division, to their respective ships.

Though noon had barely passed when the signal to embark was hung out, so great was the deficiency of boats attached to the squadron, and so extremely limited the exertions of the seamen, that the sun had long set ere the rearmost divisions gained the vessels. The consequence was, both to myself and others, exceedingly mortifying; for we could obtain but a very imperfect view of the splendid scenery which distinguishes the course of the Clyde, especially towards its mouth, at the Kyles of Bute. We beheld, indeed, hazily through the twilight,

the far-off mountains of Argyleshire, rearing their giant tops into the clouds as if to catch the last glimmering of day; whilst nearer at hand that sweep of bold coast which marks the termination of the Highlands, and draws a line of distinction between them and the low country, at least as palpable as the river itself, could be discerned. But of the particular features of the landscape, no impression could be obtained; all except the broad outline being confounded and rendered indistinct by the fast approaching darkness. Yet was there, in the marine view itself, sufficient to stir up in most bosoms a sensation of no ordinary interest. Three vessels of war, a frigate with a couple of gun-brigs, had under their convoy on that occasion full fifty transports and store-ships. These, lifting their anchors and casting their canvass loose to the breeze, swept in a body down the noble river, which roared and frothed under the pressure of their keels, as if the might of a storm had been on it; whilst the frequent firing of signal guns, the shouting of the people from the shore answered from every deck, the hailing of the several masters as ship passed ship so closely

as to bring both into danger, all these combined to produce a scene, which, when once witnessed, it is not very easy to forget. By degrees, however, as on such occasions invariably happens, things settled themselves down into order and comparative quiet. Greenock with its crowded shores was gradually left behind, the fleet held its course without accident or mishap, and the frith widening as the night closed in, every remote object became shrouded in utter darkness. Finally, all that the eye could embrace, was a cloud of canvass scattered over a surface of broad water, and the only sound audible was the soothing but melancholy ripple of waves, as they parted by the ship's bow, and broke against her sides.

I pass by the occurrences of the voyage as in themselves but little deserving of notice, and having no reference whatever to the issues of the history which I am at present pledged to narrate. The weather being for the most part favourable, and the breeze light and moderate, the men were enabled to keep a great deal upon deck,—a circumstance which, crowded as they were, contributed not a little to preserve them

in health; whilst the officers gladly availed themselves of the leisure thus afforded, to carry on the system of drill as far as it could be carried within limits so narrow and in a situation so inconvenient. With respect, again, to the young couple, no single accident fell out calculated, as far as I am aware, to draw upon them the attention of their comrades. Helen Shaw continued to be the idol of the division to which she was attached,—a distinction to which her open yet correct behaviour justly entitled her; whilst the renewed intimacy between Allen Dhu and Allen Roy seemed to become every day more and more exclusive; but these were events too common to attract attention at the time, far less to justify minute relation now. Enough is done when I inform you, that after encountering a severe storm, which scattered the fleet in all directions, and led to the capture of three transports having a portion of the 71st on board, the main body landed at Statten Island in the month of July, where it was divided into several small battalions, and brigaded with other corps, in the army under the command of General Howe.

For a reason similar to that which caused me to avoid any minute narrative of our voyage, I abstain from giving even a meagre outline of the varied and severe services in which we were for some time engaged. You doubtless know, that at the battle of Brooklyn, Fraser's Highlanders did their duty; and that had they been permitted to follow up the successes which they obtained, they would have given a very different turn to the affair from that which actually occurred. In the skirmishing and desultory campaign which followed, we took no insignificant part, especially in the expeditions to Willsburgh and Westfield, with which the spring of 1777 opened; after which we accompanied the army to the Chesapeake, and penetrated with it into Pennsylvania. Of course we were actively engaged in the battle of Brandywine, and in the whole series of movements that followed. We formed part, moreover, of the force under General Vaughan, which attempted, though unhappily too late, to bring assistance to Burgoyne; and one of our battalions had the honour of leading the assault under which Fort Montgomery fell. But why go through such

details? I may say without vanity, that there were few hard services, from 1776 up to 1781, in which we were not engaged. It was owing mainly to the exertions of part of our corps that Savannah fell in 1778;—our services at Brien's Creek in 1779 stand recorded in history; whilst the conduct of the very company to which the two Macdonalds were attached, on the retreat from before Charlestown, was too chivalrous to be passed over in silence.

General Prevost, who commanded us at the affair of Brien's Creek, encouraged by his success there to attempt greater things, pushed on with much rapidity, and considerable show of confidence, to Charlestown. Had he attacked the place immediately, as common prudence required that he should, there is no probability whatever that he would have failed in carrying it; because the garrison, expecting nothing less than the appearance of a British force in their front, was prepared to submit almost without striking a blow. Unfortunately, however, General Prevost considered it necessary to summon the place, and to grant the governor time for consideration,—a measure which ended, as

the slightest foresight might have assured him it would, in the refusal of that functionary to open his gates. In the mean while the American General Lincoln, hearing of the situation of Charlestown, made all haste to relieve it from its exigencies. One of his messengers being taken in an endeavour to pass our lines, was brought before General Prevost, and strictly interrogated; when it appeared that the force of which Lincoln was at the head, not only surpassed us greatly in numbers, but in ordnance also. General Prevost became instantly, and perhaps justly alarmed. He determined to raise the siege without a moment's delay; and seeing that the main roads were all occupied by Lincoln's detachments, he gave orders that the retreat should be conducted along the sea-coast. I will not detain you by describing, as they merit, the hardships and privations to which this movement subjected us. Enough is done when I state, that our entire route lay through pathless forests, swamps, salt-water marshes, or desert prairies, where not provisions only, meaning thereby meat and bread, were wanting, but where a draught of fresh water was not to

be had. I really do not recollect, in the course of a tolerably active career, any period of military service more harassing than this.

This long and distressing march brought us, at last, to Stono Ferry, from whence the main body of the little army passed in open boats by divisions over to John's Island. It so happened, however, that the Quarter-master General, under the guidance of an unprincipled loyalist, by name Macgirt, had gone with a party on a foraging expedition ;—and it was esteemed necessary to leave a portion of the division in the rear to protect their return, and see them safe over. One of our battalions, with a regiment of Hessians, were allotted to this service. We intrenched ourselves as well as we could, by throwing up a sort of rude redoubt in the sand, which, though destitute of artillery, and itself scarcely grape-shot proof, promised to afford us some shelter ; where we waited with exemplary patience till the foragers, loaded with booty, returned, and made good their passage to the island. Whence it came about that we were not instantly withdrawn, as soon as the professed object of our sojourn was attained, though I have

often asked the question, I have never been able to ascertain. We certainly expected that such an event would follow, and made every preparation for it; but so far was it from taking place, that we were absolutely isolated in our position. Colonel Prevost, the Quarter-master General, more occupied, as it would seem, with his plunder than with us, carried away with him the only boats that plied upon the ferry; and we were in consequence cut off from all communication with our comrades upon the island.

A blunder so egregious was not likely to be overlooked by a man of General Lincoln's activity of mind and body. Having full five thousand men under his orders, he no sooner heard of our situation, than he pushed forward two thousand, with the whole of his artillery, to attack us; whilst we in vain made signals to our friends on the opposite shore, that we were in danger. It was now, when the approach of this formidable column had been ascertained, that our company, amounting to no more than four officers and fifty-six men, was sent out to reconnoitre. The country being every where covered with thick wood, we could discover

nothing of the enemy for some time, till they suddenly burst upon us in overwhelming numbers, whilst crossing a space somewhat more open than the rest. Not a moment was lost in making such preparations as the circumstances of the case required. We formed as light infantry, fully resolved to hold our ground whilst a man remained standing; and the determination thus entered into was, I do assure you, almost literally carried into effect. The enemy came on with great fury; their numbers, their cannon, every thing encouraged them; whilst we stood our ground stoutly, because we knew that the safety of our comrades depended upon their gaining time to prepare. The result was, that every officer and man, with the exception of seven privates, fell dead or wounded; and that these seven absolutely refused to retreat, seeing that the movement would compel them to leave their officers behind. Finally, the enemy, whether struck by the obstinacy of the resistance offered, or admiring too much the bravery of their opponents to press them hard, ceased firing, and I, with two others, was carried off by these seven champions, in perfect

safety, to the redoubt. It may not be amiss if I add here, that the redoubt was furiously assailed soon after; but that the same spirit which animated one company, animated the whole battalion. The Americans were repulsed in every charge; and we did not evacuate our little work till after they had withdrawn, and General Prevost considered it expedient to pursue his march upon Savannah.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE made no particular mention all this while, either of Helen Shaw or the two Macdonalds. The truth is, that though the friends bore their full share in every battle and skirmish, there seemed to be a charmed shield before them to protect them from injury; and being both hardy and robust in no ordinary degree, they went through the fatigues of desultory warfare without suffering. With respect again to Helen, as long as our services led us only a short distance from head-quarters, and we were pretty well aware of finding quarters, or at least leisure for occasional repose, she followed with patience and perseverance the fortunes of her husband; sometimes toiling on foot in the centre of his company, sometimes

mounted upon a horse or ass in rear of the column. On such occasions, it was delightful to see with what avidity the soldiers in general strove to render her assistance. Her little bundle was carried in turns, not only by Allen's comrades, but by men comparatively strangers to him; there was not a havresack, or drinking-horn in the line, the contents of which were not at her service; in camp, in billets, and in bivouac, the snuggest station was always allotted to her; and her hut might have been frequently an object of desire to the General himself. But as the military duties of the corps became more irregular, and its expeditions remote and uncertain in their aim, she was prevailed upon, though not without great difficulty, to stay behind. By this means she escaped the hardships which attended our excursion against Charlestown, and the retreat from that place, of which I have just taken notice; remaining quietly all that while in Savannah, whither she accompanied us at the period of its capture.

From the date of our return to Savannah, as above described, up to the autumn of 1779, our

battalion continued to do garrison duty in that place. It cannot, however, be said, that we experienced any great accession to our comforts, by being kept thus in a state of apparent repose. Partly, I believe, in consequence of so sudden a change from extreme activity to absolute rest; partly, because the swamps which girdle in the place on two sides emit horrid exhalations, our men, who had borne the fatigues of marching with admirable endurance, began gradually to droop, and give way to sickness. A malignant fever got amongst us, to which not a few of our best soldiers fell victims; and as all the efforts of our medical attendants proved inadequate to arrest its progress, the hospital soon became crowded. Sad and mournful were the scenes which now presented themselves on every side. Men in the prime of life, whose frames seemed capable of setting hardships at defiance, whose hearts were as true as their arms were strong, and their courage beyond the reach of doubt or question, sank under the ravages of disease, no less readily than children; and our ranks were woe-

fully thinned, without any advantage arising from it, either to the cause of our country, or to the renown of the survivors.

Among others attacked by this sad distemper, was Allen Roy. Manfully and stoutly he struggled against it, holding it as a truth not to be controverted, that there are few distempers which a vigorous exertion of resolution will not shake off; but, on this occasion, disease was too many even for his courage, and at last gained the ascendency over him. As a matter of course, an order was transmitted by the surgeon for his immediate removal into hospital, and the waggon, which conveyed the sick to their wards, was at the door; but to this, neither Helen nor Allen Dhu would consent, both of them entertaining a superstitious horror of that abode of misery. The latter could not, without a breach of military duty, remonstrate; he only entreated as a favour, that his friend might not be removed: the former, with all the energy which a pretty woman knows how to exert, urged the same petition, and she prevailed. Permission was accordingly granted for Allen Roy's continuance in his quarters, with

the understanding that Helen Shaw would be his nurse; and never was promise more cheerfully made, or more scrupulously fulfilled.

For many days Allen Roy kept his bed, during some of which he was delirious; Helen tending him all the while with the vigilance of a mother. She moistened his lips as he lay insensible, or in that heavy slumber which resembles death more than sleep; she beguiled his sufferings into a temporary forgetfulness by her gentleness, smoothed his pillow when it became hard and knotty from long pressure, administered to him with her own hand every drug which he swallowed; and night after night watched over him, when her husband's duty hindered him from performing that office. Nor, perhaps, was it the least trial to her constancy, that she was condemned to listen, on such occasions, to expressions and declarations, such as could not fail to shock her excessive delicacy. The secret which he had preserved with so much care whilst reason held her sway over him, burst from poor Allen Roy in his hour of weakness. During the paroxysms of delirium he raved continually of Helen. He spoke of

her sometimes as the light of his soul, as the object of his idolatrous worship, as an angel too good for him. At other times he upbraided her with cruelty; accused her of deceit, and having broken the vows which she once pledged to him. Then again he would call upon Allen Dhu,—implore him not to carry Helen away; but to leave her, at all events, where he might behold her, and drink in the music of her voice. Helen heard all this, and perfectly understood it, though with true womanly delicacy she abstained from repeating it even to her husband; and she never for a moment permitted the uneasy feeling which it occasioned, to interfere with her attentions to the poor invalid.

Allen Roy's constitution was a good one, and the care taken of him such as no man in the regiment besides himself could have commanded. Thanks to these combined causes, he at last began to exhibit symptoms of convalescence; and being spared the confinement, the fetid atmosphere, and nauseous viands of a public hospital, his recovery was not less sure than rapid. But Allen's mind could not regain its

tone either with the celerity or ease with which his body recovered its vigour. The passion which years of determined reasoning had succeeded in smothering up, burst out again in full violence now, and he quitted his sick room an altered man, not in heart or disposition, but in manner. Poor fellow! the elasticity of spirit which had rendered him the idol of his companions was gone. He returned to their society indeed, and to the routine of his duty; and he mixed in the one, and punctually discharged the other; but it was with a languor which no efforts on his part could remove, nor any asseverations of its non-existence conceal.

Things were in this state when, towards the latter end of September 1779, official intelligence reached us, that Count d'Estaing had arrived on the coast of Georgia, with a fleet of twenty sail of the line, besides frigates and transports, and a numerous army, for the purpose of recapturing Savannah. I cannot tell whence it came about, but though we had now been in possession of the place nearly two years, no attempt whatever had been made to

fortify it. It was still perfectly open, depending entirely upon the river and the swamps for cover; for the abattis which closed up its rear had fallen into ruins, and the total number of the garrison, including Highlanders, Hessians, and two companies of the 60th, amounted barely to eleven hundred effectives. Of the combined French and American army, on the other hand, no reports spoke as less than twelve thousand strong; whilst many held it to be much more numerous, and all pronounced it complete in every species of equipment. It would have been extraordinary, had we, under such circumstances, experienced no alarm, more especially as we were then commanded by an officer in whom little reliance was placed. Nevertheless, we made every preparation to defend ourselves which our very inadequate means would allow, resolved not to give away either the town or our own freedom without a struggle.

It was well for us that the French commander deemed it necessary to approach Savannah *selon les règles*. Had he landed his people where we landed ours, and pushed forward, as

we did, at once to the assault,—high as I rate the valour of the garrison, I cannot doubt but that he would have carried all before him; but this would have been to violate grossly every established regulation,—a crime of which the Count d'Estaing would not for the world have been guilty. We were regularly summoned to surrender on capitulation; and time being demanded to consider of the proposal, it was not refused. I neglected to mention that on the retreat from Stono Ferry, one of our battalions, under the gallant Colonel Maitland, was left to keep possession of Port Royal. To this officer General Prevost despatched immediate intelligence of the perilous condition in which Savannah stood, urging him, should he find the measure practicable, to come to our assistance. Colonel Maitland was not slow in obeying the order. Avoiding all the principal passes and fords which cross the numerous creeks and swamps that divide one station from the other, he made a wide detour through woods and morasses hitherto esteemed impassable, and he arrived with seven hundred Highlanders within our lines, at a moment when it was se-

riously debated whether we ought not to surrender. Colonel Maitland infused fresh courage into the little army. Resistance to the last extremity was now the universal cry; and measures were forthwith adopted so as to render that resistance not only desperate but successful.

You have all doubtless heard of Colonel Moncrief, the distinguished engineer whose life afterwards fell a sacrifice to his inattention to an order which himself had issued. That excellent officer, who was with us on the present occasion, no sooner ascertained the decision of the council of war, than he drew out a circle of field works, upon which every disposable man, both citizen and soldier, became immediately employed. The labour thus imposed upon us was doubtless great, but it produced the very happiest results; for before the enemy had time to offer any interruption, our lines were rendered to a certain extent tenable. Batteries sprang up in every direction, a single night sufficing to complete and arm them; breastworks, flêches, and traverses blocked up every interval; and the enemy found themselves under

the necessity of breaking ground, as if before a regular fortification. Nor were they permitted to carry on their approaches without many a severe check. Several sorties were made, every one of which caused great loss to the assailants, at a comparatively trifling expense of life to us; insomuch that we began to hold exceedingly cheap, both the courage and skill of the besiegers.

In most of these brilliant little affairs, the two Macdonalds, as usual, were foremost. Allen Roy, in particular, seemed to set death at defiance, absolutely thrusting himself in the way of fire whenever he found an opportunity; yet the same good fortune which had on so many previous occasions protected him, ceased not to operate now. Neither he nor Allen Dhu received a scratch, though neither avoided, and one may be said to have courted it. But events were drawing fast to a crisis, and proof was at last to be given, that their persons, though hitherto preserved, were not charmed.

The siege had gone on in this tedious manner till the end of the first week in October, when

D'Estaing, irritated by so many interruptions, and alarmed for the safety of his fleet, which rode in an open sea, and was continually exposed to attacks from the English, determined to try the fortune of a general assault. With this view he formed his army into three columns, an hour before day-light, on the 9th; and directing one to penetrate through the swamp to the left, and another to attack the river flank, he made ready to advance in person at the head of the third against the face which looks towards the inclined plane. Though we had heard that an attempt was about to be made, and were consequently under arms to repel it, some time elapsed ere we were able to ascertain where the chief danger lay. The morning broke slowly and gloomily, a thick fog rising with the sun, which rendered objects quite as obscure as they were during the night; and hence, though we distinctly heard the tread of feet and the rattling of accoutrements in all directions, we could not tell how, or by what routes the assailants were advancing. By degrees, however, the fog cleared away. The sun burst through, and showed us the enemy in very mixed and

irregular order; one detachment floundering in the bog, where they had lost themselves, another threatening rather than attacking the wharfs, and a third in close and compact array bearing down upon us. We hailed the spectacle with a loud and spirited cheer; and our batteries opening, the contest began with extreme violence.

A few discharges from the artillery, which commanded the swamp, served utterly to destroy the column which threatened from that quarter. The men having wandered from the pass, were already more than half defeated by the difficulties of the ground over which they strove to make their way; and the cool and steady practice of our admirable gunners soon completed their rout. In like manner the river column, either by design or accident, forbore to act otherwise than as a feint; but it was not so with the band of brave men which pushed for our principal redoubt, and which the Count d'Estaing led on in person. These advanced with extraordinary courage under a fire as murderous as I have ever witnessed. Whole sections were swept down with grape and mus-

ketry; yet those behind only sprang forward with increased alacrity, to be annihilated in their turn. At last the head of the column reached the ditch, into which company after company poured, exposed to the tremendous volleys which our people threw upon them; ladders were planted, and men bravely scaled them, only to be beaten down with the butts of muskets, or pierced through with bayonets; whilst shouts, groans, oaths, and shrieks, rose wildly and furiously over the roar of battle. At last a French officer, followed by about a dozen grenadiers, gained the rampart, and for an instant the white flag waved in triumph; but it was only for an instant. The officer was stabbed to the heart by the dagger of Allen Roy, whilst the flag was torn down by his friend; and the entire party which had given such proofs of their devotion and courage, ceased in one moment to exist. It was the last effort of the assailants. Broken, dispirited, baffled at every point, they wavered, retired, and fled, a few skirmishers only, with admirable self-devotion, lagging behind to cover their retreat; whose fire was so well directed, that it did

considerable execution, and checked the pursuit which had already begun. One of the sufferers from that tiraillade was Allen Dhu. A ball penetrating his groin, he staggered back upon his friend, who kept, as usual, close in his rear; and uttering a deep groan, he fell, without sign of life or motion, upon the bloody parapet.

Loud, shrill, and agonizing, was the cry which burst from Allen Roy, as he gazed upon the body of his prostrate friend.

"My friend, my friend! my brother, my more than brother!—look up—one look, only one, to tell me that I am not deserted. Oh, Allen Dhu, for my sake, for Helen's sake, look up. You cannot leave her desolate and lonely,—the world is too cold to shelter her without you. Allen, Allen! brother of my affections! Oh, speak to me!" He cast aside his musket, and leaned over the body with hands clasped wildly together and eyes tearless. "What, not a word,—not a syllable to him who has so long shared your very thoughts,—will you not speak one little word to me!" At this moment Allen Dhu opened his eyes. His lips moved, and he articulated something, which, however, could

not be understood. Again he struggled hard, and succeeded.

"Helen, poor Helen!" said he, gasping at every syllable. "Be her protector, Allen;—do not suffer her to need a friend."

"Never, never!" exclaimed his comrade. "So may God help me in my hour of need, as I succour or desert her in her distress."

"Thanks, thanks, Allen! Promise me that you will marry her, and I can die in peace."

"No, no, no! Allen Dhu, you shall not die. You shall live to make her happy, for many, many years; and I will be happy too, in witnessing your prosperity."

He had scarcely uttered these words, when some others of the soldiers coming up, readily volunteered their aid in conveying Allen Dhu to his quarters. They raised him gently from the ground, laid him upon a blanket, and then stepping forward with much caution, proceeded on their way. But now a terrible anticipation came over Allen Roy. How was Helen to be told of this? who would prepare her for a shock so tremendous? The question was put both to himself and others for no purpose.

Evil tidings, as every body knows, fly upon the wings of the wind, and they were not more slow in reaching the object to be affected by them on the present than on other occasions. Helen soon heard all. She ran like an insane person through the streets, regardless of every attempt to delay her, till met by the melancholy procession, but a little way from the spot where it began.

"Speak, speak!" shrieked she. "Tell me the worst at once. Is my husband dead?"

"No, no!" replied Allen Roy, brushing a tear from his rugged cheek as he spoke. "Thank God, he yet lives! He is wounded, but—"

Helen heard no more. "God be praised! God be praised!" cried she, and fell senseless to the ground.

Of the events which immediately followed, your own imaginations must alone supply you with an adequate picture. Allen Dhu, and his soul-stricken wife, were conveyed, with all care and gentleness, to their quarters, where every aid which professional skill could afford, was bestowed upon them. As to Helen, she soon

recovered from her fit; and feeling that now, more than at any former period, exertion was necessary, she so far subdued her feelings as to become the nurse of her wounded husband. Some days elapsed, however, ere the surgeons gave her any ground to anticipate, that even her assiduity, unremitting as it was, could lead to a favourable result. The ball could not be extracted, though its course was plainly traced with the probe; and whilst that remained in the hurt, it appeared extremely improbable that the patient would recover. But Helen's hopes were of a nature not to be depressed. She was sure that God would not take Allen from her,—he could not die,—it was never designed that she should survive him;—no, no, they only mocked her when they talked of danger to such a being as Allen Dhu. In this manner she contrived not only to reason herself into the persuasion that her husband must be restored to her, but even the patient himself began by degrees to participate in her enthusiasm.

There is no knowing how great the power of imagination may be, even in a case such as that of which I am now speaking. Every prac-

titioner knows, that in what are called ordinary diseases, the patient's recovery depends as much upon himself as upon the medicines which he swallows, or the care of his leech; and perhaps the nervous system may not be without its influence in the military hospital, as well as in the private chamber. Be this as it may, nothing can be more certain than that Allen Dhu, contrary to all expectation, sank not under a wound, which from the first had been pronounced mortal. On the contrary, though the hurt itself was far from closing up, no fever or other bad symptom showed itself; and at the end of three weeks, he was pronounced to be in a fair way towards recovery. I cannot pretend to describe the effect which this blessed sentence produced upon poor Helen. It is true that she had never yielded to the fears which all around her entertained; she had determined not to do so, and she kept her word; but the effort was forced, unnatural, and laborious, and it led to a profession, perhaps, rather than a real persuasion, in the end. Now, however, she felt, as well as spoke, like a shipwrecked mariner when his foot has touched the shore,

Allen must recover; she had all along said so, and she was not deceived. "God be praised! God be praised!" exclaimed she, clasping her thin white hands together, whilst tears, the first she had shed since the assault, poured in streams over her face. "I have ever been taught to believe that *He* is good and gracious, desiring not the misery but the welfare of his creatures; and now I know of a truth, that the lesson is true, even to its letter. Allen, my own Allen, will live. What am I, to receive such unspeakable mercies at His hands!"

CHAPTER IV.

It was well for Allen Dhu, that from the month of October up to the ensuing March, no event of any importance occurred in this part of the world. The Count d'Estaing, having lost upwards of 1500 men in the assault, remained in his lines only till the battering artillery could be withdrawn, and the stores removed; after which, his army was precipitately embarked, and the fleet sailed for the West Indies. No other enemy showed himself in front of Savannah. During the entire winter of 1779-80, we enjoyed a state of profound peace, from which we were roused only to take part in a war, the very reverse of defensive.

The middle of March was approaching, when an order arrived from Sir Henry Clinton, who

was then occupied in the investment of Charlestown, and making preparations for the siege, requiring a strong detachment from the garrison of Savannah to march to his assistance, under the guidance of Brigadier-general Patterson. No delay was used in complying with the requisition; and a brigade, which included in its strength our battalion, immediately crossed the river, and began its march. At this period, Allen Dhu, though returned to his duty, was far from being in a fit state to enter upon an active campaign. The ball still remained in his groin; he was, in consequence, subject to occasional fits of pain; and the great activity, which used to distinguish him above his fellows, was gone; yet such was his military ardour, that no recommendation on the part of the officers could induce him to remain behind, and he once more took his place in the column, as he had done before. As to Helen, no human power could, I believe, have kept her behind him. Heaven had miraculously given him to her even from the jaws of death,—she was not therefore going to abandon him again; and though repeatedly warned of the hardships

which the corps might expect to undergo, she only laughed at the individual who talked of such things as seriously alarming. With the battalion she accordingly proceeded, and a horse being found for her, and every possible favour shown to her by the way, she made good her journey, arduous as it was, without any particular mishap.

The march in question was, like most others in this inhospitable country, productive of a good deal of suffering, and some danger. On every side of us bands of hostile militia swarmed; and our route lying through swamps and difficult passes, it was not very easy to avoid at all times harassing, because unprofitable skirmishes. Few of these were, as you may suppose, productive of any remarkable issue; but there was one adventure on the road, so striking of its kind, and so very honourable to the troops engaged in it, that I cannot resist the inclination which I experience of describing it at length.

To cover the advance of the little column, two light corps, one under the command of Major Ferguson, another headed by Major Cochrane,

moved upon its flanks, to which the office of meeting and driving back all opposition was intrusted. It happened on a certain occasion, that these active and intelligent officers received intimation that an American corps was in their front; and each, without knowing that the other had arrived at the same determination, resolved if possible to surprise it. With this view both quitted their ground soon after night-fall, and pushed by different roads towards the spot where they had ascertained that the enemy lay in bivouac. It happened that in this race Ferguson was foremost. He reached the right of the enemy's encampment before midnight; but finding to his sorrow that they had already retreated, he caused his men to trim the smouldering fires, and lie down. About a couple of hours before dawn, Cochrane came up to the same point; and seeing numerous fires blazing, with men moving or lying about them, he naturally concluded that the Rebels held their ground. Each party, mistaking that opposed to it for the enemy, formed without delay; and advanced with great resolution to the charge. At this critical moment, before a

shot was fired, the two commanding officers being in front of their respective lines, happily recognized each other's voices, when issuing orders for the commencement of the action. Nothing could be more fortunate, nor was the steadiness of troops ever put to a severer trial. Had the firing once begun, which with raw soldiers would have certainly been the case, the most fatal result must have ensued; but here the whole danger was averted ere it reached a head, and not a single life was lost.

It is not necessary for me to lay before you a particular account of the siege and capture of Charlestown. Enough is done when I state, that on the first of April ground was broken before it, and the first parallel, supported by several strong redoubts, drawn; and that by the eighth, several batteries were erected on commanding spots, and fully armed with guns. In the mean while, Admiral Arbuthnot, who commanded the fleet, passed the bar with a squadron of light frigates; and in spite of a severe opposition, succeeded in forcing his way beyond Sullivan's Island. He then steered without pausing to the entrance of the harbour,

which he effectually blocked up, thus cutting off all communication between the town and the neighbouring country by water. Soon after this, Colonel Tarlton, with his Legion, supported by our light companies, and a provincial corps, surprised and cut to pieces a body of Americans upon Cooper river; and Charlestown became, in consequence, closely invested on all sides. What followed was but the irksome and uninteresting routine of a siege. Our advances were pushed skilfully though slowly; no sorties were made to interrupt us; and every one of the outworks which at all stood in our way surrendered. Finally, after our batteries from the third parallel had played with prodigious effect during the period from the 8th to the 11th of May, General Lincoln, the American Governor, proposed to capitulate. He had already been offered terms, which he refused; and even now he endeavoured to gain from us advantages which his position by no means warranted; but at last he gladly accepted such as our General deemed it just to offer, and gave up the place. The Governor marched out with all the ho-

nours of war, except that the colours were cased, and the drums were forbidden to beat; and nearly six thousand soldiers, besides a thousand seamen, became conventional prisoners.

Neither our loss during these operations, nor that of the enemy, was great, something under a hundred men being killed, and less than two hundred wounded, on both sides. As to the Highlanders, they suffered in a very trifling degree, not one man, as far as I know, being among the slain. But the consequences to our invalids of so much excitement as a siege produces, were perhaps as singular as can well be imagined. They absolutely recovered their health, Allen Dhu not excepted; and appeared at the close of the operations more fit for an active campaign, than they had been since their sickness began. Nor was much leisure-time granted for the subsiding of the tide. General Clinton, believing that his presence in New York was necessary to save it from the attacks with which it was menaced by Washington, gave up the command of the southern district to Lord Cornwallis;

and we very soon found that his Lordship was not disposed to make a sinecure of his trust, either to his own followers or to the enemy.

On the 18th of May, Lord Cornwallis, at the head of a division two thousand five hundred strong, directed his march to Lenew's Ferry, where with some difficulty, arising from the absence of an adequate number of boats, he crossed the South river. This done, a light corps, under the orders of Lieutenant-colonel Tarlton, was despatched in pursuit of the American Colonel Burford, whom, with some four or five hundred men that enterprising officer totally defeated, whilst the main body, marching upon Cambden, took up a position there at once covering the frontier of South, and threatening that of North Carolina.

In this situation we remained during the months of June, July, and a part of August, having our front and flanks covered by fortified posts at Ninety Six, Hanging Rock, and Rocky Mount. Active as he was, and zealous in his country's service, Lord Cornwallis found himself so hampered by civil affairs, that to attempt farther conquests till the country in his rear

had been regulated, would have been, he well knew, to no purpose. In the mean while the enemy, encouraged by our supineness, and justly alive to the critical state of their affairs in this quarter, spared no exertions to embody a force capable not only of resisting us in case of our advance, but of acting upon the offensive. Many daring partisans, likewise, beat up our posts in every direction. Colonel Sumpter twice assaulted the garrison of Rocky Mountain, unsuccessfully it is true, but with great gallantry; a detachment of thirty-five dragoons and sixty infantry was cut off at Fishing Creek; and what was worst of all, our own militia, gained over by the promises of Congress, began to desert in great numbers. Nor was this all that befell during our compulsory truce, calculated to rouse, if not alarm us. We heard from a source which left no room to doubt the authenticity of the rumour, that the French General Kalbe was advancing from Salisbury with a large body of Continentals; that Colonel Porterfield was leading State troops from Virginia; and that General Caswal, having embodied a strong force in North Carolina, was in

full march towards us. By and by it was ascertained that General Gates, who so highly distinguished himself in the North, had arrived to take upon himself the command of the district; and that his army, amounting to full six or seven thousand men, might be expected daily in our presence.

Lord Rawdon, to whom, during his political residence in Charlestown, Lord Cornwallis had committed the charge of the troops, was no sooner made aware of these contingencies, than he began gradually to draw in his detachments, and to contract his columns. With this view the posts at Hanging Rock and Rocky Mount were abandoned, and the army closing up about fourteen miles in front of Cambden, took ground on the west branch of Lynches Creek. We had not long occupied this position ere General Gates appeared, advancing to the very edge of the creek opposite to our camp; and numerous, though in general not very fatal skirmishes, ensued between the pickets. In particular, a post at Rugeley's Mills, upon which the safety of our left flank mainly depended, was more than once attempted in real

earnest, and was maintained only by the daring gallantry of the Legion Infantry which held it. At last Lord Rawdon saw, or imagined that he saw, reason for apprehending that General Gates was about to turn his position, and march upon Cambden, where all our stores, with a multitude of sick and wounded, lay under a very feeble guard. To hinder this, he determined to give up his strong ground at Lynches Creek, and to retire to the town: and he carried that resolution into practice on the 12th of August. We then established ourselves at a place of no strength nor adaptation for defensive operations, called Long Town, where Lord Cornwallis, to the great joy of the troops, soon arrived to take the command.

Early in the morning of the day which followed our retreat, General Gates put his army in motion. He took possession of Rugeley's Mills, sent his baggage with two brigades of infantry, some cannon and cavalry, to the north side of Granney-quarters Creek, and pushed a corps of light infantry across Lynches Creek, on the high road leading to Cambden. It so happened that on this very day we were joined

by four light companies, which had hitherto kept post at Ninety Six; and a little before midnight Lord Cornwallis himself crossed the Wateree ferry, and arrived in camp. No two events could have occurred more happily, or more according to the wishes of the troops. A new spirit seemed at once to arise in every bosom. Men spoke out boldly and decidedly as to the future; and his Lordship's proceedings gave abundant evidence that he would not willingly disappoint the expectations of his followers. The 14th was devoted entirely to the re-organizing of the cavalry, and the bringing of every disposable man into the line; and a rumour soon spread abroad that, before long, matters would be brought to the issue of a battle.

Nothing took place, during the earlier part of the 15th, confirmatory of the expectations which men had formed; but in the afternoon Earl Cornwallis directed Lieutenant-colonel Tarlton to obtain circumstantial intelligence of the enemy's strength and intentions, by intercepting some of his patroles, or carrying off some prisoners from his pickets. Colonel

Tarlton was neither backward in obeying, nor unfortunate in failing to execute both the letter and the spirit of these injunctions. About ten miles from Cambden, in the direction of Rugeley's Mills, he succeeded in securing three American soldiers, who reported that they were on their way from Lynches Creek to join the army on the high road, and that General Gates had issued orders for his troops to move from their ground, so as to attack the camp near Cambden in the morning. Tarlton lost no time in conveying these men back to headquarters. Being re-examined there, and their account judged probable, orders were immediately issued for the several regiments and corps to stand to their arms. The town, containing magazine, baggage, hospital, and prisoners, was committed to the care of a small body of Provincials, and the weakest convalescents in the army; whilst the entire disposable force made ready to move in any direction, and at a moment's notice.

In this state affairs continued till about ten o'clock at night, when the army moved from its ground, and formed the line of march on the

main road towards Rugeley's Mills. Our force, which consisted of four weak battalions of the line, a battalion of the volunteers of Ireland, a corps of Loyalists, and one of Refugees, besides Tarlton's Legion, horse and foot, with a detachment of the 17th dragoons, was thus distributed. An advanced guard, consisting of twenty troopers, and a like number of mounted riflemen, supported by four companies of light infantry, led the way. It was followed, at a short interval, by the first division or brigade, composed of the 23rd and 33rd regiments, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Webster. The centre division, of which Lord Rawdon was at the head, comprised the volunteers of Ireland, Hamilton's Loyalists, the Legion Infantry, and Bryan's Refugees; whilst the two battalions of Fraser's Highlanders formed the reserve. Four pieces of cannon marched with the divisions, and two with the reserve; under cover of which moved a few waggons, loaded with necessary stores; and the whole was closed in by a party of dragoons of the Legion, which did the duty of a rear-guard.

We proceeded on in this order, without meet-

ing with alarm or check, till we arrived at a narrow water-course, called Sander's Creek, five miles, or perhaps something more, from Cambden. Here a slight confusion took place, arising entirely from the difficulty of fording the stream in a dark night; but a short halt remedied the evil, and we again pressed forward. As it was essential to the success of the intended operation, that the enemy should obtain no knowledge of our advance, the strictest injunctions were given to the men to preserve silence. Our people were not unmindful of this. Not a word was spoken from the moment of our quitting the creek; and, except the heavy tread of feet and hoofs, which could not be remedied, not a sound arose indicative of troops in motion. But our precautions, though in every respect such as common prudence required, failed, owing to particular circumstances, of producing their full effect. The enemy, unknown to us, were likewise in motion; and the heads of the hostile columns met, at a moment when by neither party such rencontre was anticipated.

It might be about two o'clock in the morning, when we, who moved at the cue of the

column, were suddenly startled by the report of firing in front. At first, a few random shots only were exchanged, as if our advanced guard had fallen in with a straggling party, and had engaged it; but presently a heavy volley was given, and then a rapid and lengthened tiraillade ensued. Now then we began to suspect that work was cut out for us. Mounted officers came galloping to the rear, with orders for the regiments to close up as quickly as possible; and, in a short time, the three divisions were joined into one, ready to deploy, or take ground in any direction. This had hardly been effected, however, when the firing ceased with the same abruptness with which it began, and all was for a space quiet.

The truth is, that our leading dragoons having unexpectedly come upon a body of American horse, charged them without hesitation, and with great success. Imagining that the little corps thus dispersed might be a patrol or a foraging party, the advance pushed on, till it was met by a tremendous discharge of musketry, which checked it. From the weight of

that volley, there was no room to doubt that the troops in front of us must be in force; and a prisoner or two being happily secured, it was at once discovered that the whole American army was approaching. Our advanced people instantly fell back; the light companies threw themselves on each side of the road; and the 23rd and 33rd forming line, poured in one or two volleys. The firing thus begun was kept up with much spirit during a full quarter of an hour, without, however, as may be supposed, producing any decided effect, when both parties, as if actuated by the same motive, ceased. It was now that Lord Cornwallis, with great promptitude and judgment, proceeded to make his dispositions. Unwilling to hazard his army, upon which the safety of a province depended, in the confusion of a night attack, he contented himself with closely reconnoitring the ground, which he discovered to be extremely favourable for his numbers; and then drawing up his line in battle array, he commanded the men to lie down till morning. This was immediately done; and, except that a few occasional shots, in the

direction of the advanced sentries, gave intimation that danger impended, the night was passed in as much quiet as if we had been in Cambden.

Day dawned at last, exhibiting to the anxious eyes of the troops, not their own order only, but that of the Americans. Good fortune had brought us into a position, which, from the happy narrowness of its front, secured us against being outflanked, and the wise dispositions of Lord Cornwallis had undeniably made the most of it. We occupied at this moment a sort of wooded pass, or causeway, covered on either flank by a morass, only one of which was passable, and that by a narrow pathway, very easily defended. Across this the two divisions, as they were called, drew up, Colonel Webster's holding the right, Lord Rawdon's the left. They communicated the one with the other, upon the main road, a little to the left of which, stood two sixes and two three-pounders; and they were supported by the Highlanders, formed according to battalions, one in rear of the right, the other in rear of the left. Finally, the Legion cavalry remained in column on the right of the main road, a formation from which, on account of

the thickness of the wood, they would have found it difficult to emerge, with orders to act offensively against the enemy, or defensively in aid of their friends, as opportunity offered, or necessity required. The total amount of force, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, thus arranged, scarcely came up to two thousand combatants.

In the mean while, General Gates had not been inattentive to the duties of his office, nor careless of the safety of his men. Some time before day-break, he had drawn up his army in two formidable lines, placing his Maryland regulars on the right, and his North Carolina and Virginia militia on the left and centre. These were supported, the latter by a corps of well-disciplined light infantry, the former by some squadrons of cavalry; whilst his second line, which, like his first, consisted entirely of infantry, took post some hundred and fifty, or two hundred yards, to the rear. His artillery, again, of which he had a considerable park in the field, drew up partly to the left of the right wing of the regulars, partly upon the high road, under the protection of the reserve; and

the whole kept their places with a steadiness and regularity, which would have done no disgrace to Frederick's veterans. His total force, according to official returns afterwards taken, exceeded six thousand men, of which two thousand were regular troops of the provinces of Maryland and Delaware.

CHAPTER V.

It was, I apprehend, the original design of Lord Cornwallis to receive an attack in his favourable position, for which, indeed, all his arrangements seemed to be made; but the day had scarcely dawned when circumstances fell out, which induced him to act on the offensive. General Gates, not satisfied with the situation of his North Carolina and Virginia brigades, unfortunately for himself, chose at this critical juncture to change it. You all know how hazardous it is to alter the dispositions of an army, in the immediate presence of an active enemy; and if this be the case where a force is made up entirely of veterans, much more is it to be avoided with raw militia-men. Lord Cornwallis saw the confusion into which his opponent had thrown himself, and hastened to

take advantage of it. Putting himself at the head of Webster's division, he ordered it instantly to advance, whilst an aid-de-camp communicated similar instructions to Lord Rawdon, and in a few moments the action became general and spirited throughout the whole line.

A variety of causes contributed to render this battle one of the most striking in which it has been my fortune to take part. In the first place, the unlooked-for meeting of the hostile armies at night had wound up the minds of all to a pitch of no common excitement; whilst the calmness and deliberation with which our position had been assumed, inspired us with confidence the most unbounded. Then, again, the march of our line towards the enemy, cool, steady, and collected, presented as fine a military spectacle as any one could desire to witness; and the cheer that preceded the first decisive volley rang, not in the ears only, but in the very souls of all who heard it. Nor was nature behind-hand in giving to the affair as much of sublimity as it could well receive. The morning was dull and foggy, a thick haze hanging over the swamps and woods, which not a

breath of wind blew aside: this, catching the smoke from our muskets and artillery, soon enveloped both armies in a cloud of impenetrable darkness. The consequence was, that after one or two discharges, no estimate could be formed of the effect of the fire, and the regiments pressed on in total ignorance both of the condition and order of the enemy.

No great while elapsed, however, ere the slackened fire from the American militia furnished evidence that they had given way. Our right wing accordingly pushed forward, so as to become gradually separated from the left, which sustained a much more obstinate and doubtful conflict with the Maryland regulars. The Americans were not slow in taking advantage of the opening thus given; they threw themselves in great force upon our centre, and forced it. Hitherto we had been kept in our original order, without finding an opportunity to fire a shot, and it required some exertions on the part of the officers to allay the impatient courage of their men; but now Lord Cornwallis, seeing what had occurred, rode up to us, and the opportunity so ardently desired was afforded.

"My brave Highlanders," cried he, "now is your time; spare your powder, and give them plenty of steel." One terrible shout followed this brief address, and we rushed forward. No torrent from the hills ever carried with it destruction so immediate; the enemy were swept from their ground in a moment. But the victory was not yet gained. Another strong force passing us in the haze penetrated to the very ground on which we had stood as a reserve, and for an instant obtained possession of our two three-pounders; but their cheers attracting the attention of some of the General's Staff, we were commanded without loss of time to countermarch. We did so, and again the bayonet decided the fate of the day. After this the enemy made no stand. The militia fled in irretrievable confusion, casting away their arms, and thinking only of their persons. The regulars soon followed their example, leaving guns, colours, and drums in our hands; whilst their cavalry, which vainly sought to arrest the fugitives, and, when that proved impracticable, to stop the pursuit, was overthrown with great slaughter by Tarlton's Legion. A more com-

plete rout was never perhaps witnessed; not a single corps, nor even a company, quitting the field in any thing like order.

I need not pause to tell you of the quantity of stores, baggage, and camp equipage, which fell into our hands. Colonel Tarlton, following up the pursuit a distance of two and twenty miles, returned absolutely incumbered with these things, as well as with prisoners, among whom were one general, and many other officers of all ranks: indeed the loss of the Americans both in men and materiel was as great as any which they had experienced since the commencement of the war. Two thousand men with seventy officers were placed *hors de combat*, eight pieces of cannon were taken, whilst of colours, carriages, waggons, &c. few, if any, could have been carried off. On our parts, again, we had to lament the occurrence of no more than three hundred and twenty-four casualties, out of which our regiment lost one officer and eight men killed, with two officers and thirty men wounded. Neither Allen Dhu nor his friend were of the number.

The first matter attended to after the close

of the action, was to gather together the wounded belonging to both parties, and transport them to the rear. This was done with much diligence, nor was the smallest distinction made between the treatment bestowed upon an American and that afforded to a British soldier. Numerous detachments of Loyal Militia were sent abroad in every direction, which gathered them together into bands, preparatory to their removal upon such waggons as could be procured; and the whole, under proper escort, were sent off long before night-fall to Cambden. Thither also the 71st, with the main body of the army, moved, as soon as order had been fully restored; whilst Lord Cornwallis, with the 23d, the Legion, and light infantry, marched without loss of time to Rugeley's Mills.

The day was far spent, ere, wearied with our exertions, and covered with the dust and sweat of a hard-fought field, our little column arrived in sight of the town of Cambden. Intelligence of our success had, however, preceded us, and we were in consequence met by crowds of men, women, and children; every individual capable

of moving hurrying out to bid us welcome. Of no ordinary character, though of a very varied nature, were the scenes that followed. Here you beheld a wife clasped in the arms of her husband, children clinging about the knees of their fathers, and friend embracing friend; there the poor widow called loudly upon one who would no more answer her, and the orphan wept because its mother wept, rather than from any consciousness of its loss. But among all who attracted to themselves the regard of the by-standers, none was an object of more universal sympathy than Helen Shaw. Till Allen received his wound at the assault of Savannah, it appeared as if she had never contemplated the possibility of his falling; now her thoughts ran into the very opposite extreme, and as often as he quitted her to face the enemy, she gave up all hope of his return. This had in a very striking degree been the case on the present occasion. As the field of battle was distant from Cambden little more than nine miles, the roar of cannon and musketry was distinctly heard in the latter place; and its effect upon her was

described by those who witnessed it, to have been harrowing to the feelings even of the most cold-hearted. She shed no tears, nor indulged in violent expressions; neither did she mix with any of the anxious groups that from time to time assembled in the streets; but wandering away alone to a half-finished redoubt, she sat down there to listen to the cannonade and watch its progress. Many persons addressed her in language of kindness, and would have led her home; but she scarcely deigned to notice them, and resisted all their efforts to remove her. By and by the firing ceased, and suspense the most awful took possession of every bosom. The whole town was in motion, yet there she continued to sit, her eyes fixed steadily upon the sweep of road, as if life or death depended upon the report of some expected messenger. At length he came. She, and she alone, beheld a horseman afar off, wending his way slowly through the forest; and with the speed of a roe she bounded forward to meet him. It was a wounded officer belonging to a Provincial corps, who with difficulty kept his seat; but Helen saw in him only an individual who

had borne a part in the battle and must be acquainted with its results.

"Is Allen safe?" cried she, scarcely able to articulate. "I ask you not who has conquered; but oh tell me, as you hope for mercy yourself, is Allen alive?"

"And who is Allen, my poor woman?" said the officer, kindly reining in his horse, though ill able to endure the interruption.

"My Allen!" shrieked she—"Allen Dhu,—the noblest, and handsomest, and kindest of human beings. You must know him, every body knows him, and every body loves him."

"God bless your poor soul!" replied the officer, shaking his head: "your own amiable feelings deceive you. I do not know your Allen; I am ignorant even of the regiment to which he belongs."

"It is Fraser's Highlanders," exclaimed she.

"Then be of good cheer," replied the officer. "When I quitted the field, they had not been engaged at all, and consequently could have suffered nothing."

"A thousand, and a thousand blessings be upon you for that!" exclaimed Helen; and

she ran from him in search of some new informant.

To a person circumstanced as Helen then was, every minute seems an hour, and every hour a day. Though no great space of time elapsed ere other wounded men arrived, her anxiety rose in the interval to a height which bordered upon frenzy, and reason itself tottered upon her throne, when she found that all answered as she had been answered by the first whom she had questioned. At last, however, the Highland garb could be distinguished. A group of invalids approached arrayed in the uniform of the 71st, and to these she addressed herself in terms as coherent as excessive agitation would allow. "Is Allen safe? Is Allen alive?" These were the only words she uttered, as indeed they constituted the substance of her inquiries, put, one by one, to all who came from the battle; but they were perfectly understood by the veterans now addressed, by whom the Lowland bride was immediately recognized.

"He is," cried one of the men, speaking rather in obedience to the dictates of humanity, than

from any knowledge of the truth. "The day is ours, and Allen Dhu has escaped without a scratch."

"I will see him then presently," exclaimed she, bursting for the first time into tears. "I will run forward and find him. Bless thee, bless thee, for assuring me of his safety. How can I ever show my gratitude to you for so much kindness?"

"By remaining where you are, Helen," said the soldier:—"or rather by returning with me to Cambden. A battle-field is no sight for you; and Allen will, I am sure, be here in shorter time than you would waste in looking for him."

It is not very probable that the man's arguments would have had the smallest weight with Helen, had her bodily strength been adequate to the undertaking which she meditated; but it was not. Her frame, delicate at the best, could not long support the violent feelings which agitated her mind; and so sudden a change from despair to hope proved too much for her. A mist rose before her eyes, her brain swam round, and she would have fallen to the ground,

had not the kind-hearted veteran supported her. In this condition she remained, not exactly insensible, for respiration went on as usual, and consciousness ceased not for a moment to exist, but with every bodily function completely suspended, till a sound of martial music suddenly caught her ear, and in an instant her strength returned. She sprang to her feet, listened attentively, knew that the pipes of her own brave regiment were played, and in spite of entreaties and remonstrances on the part of those about her, rushed forward. Helen was not deceived. She met us about a quarter of a mile from the spot where our wounded comrades had striven to detain her, and found her fondest wishes realized. Allen was indeed unhurt, and she, in consequence, the happiest woman breathing.

From the 16th of August, up to the middle of September, it was not our fortune to take a share in any of the numerous, desultory, and unequal operations in which portions of the army were employed. The consequence was, that we neither partook in the glory which Tarlton and the light troops acquired by their

brilliant exploit near the Catawba Fords, nor underwent the many and fatiguing marches which other detachments accomplished for no purpose. On the contrary, we rested quietly in Cambden, oppressed by no other duty than an occasional journey in patrol as far as Charlestown, whilst our sick and wounded being carefully attended to, came back to their standards in great numbers. I need scarcely add that by no persons was this interval of quiet more keenly enjoyed than by Allen Dhu and his wife. All Helen's apprehensions seemed for the time to have subsided, and in the society of her husband and her husband's faithful friend, Allen Roy, she permitted care and anxiety to go to sleep.

I think it was about the 20th of September, when his little army having been reinforced by the 7th British regiment, besides a good many recruits for the Provincial corps, Lord Cornwallis came to the determination of advancing into North Carolina. With this view he marched upon Charlotte Town, which after a short and ineffectual resistance was carried by Tarlton's dragoons, supported by a few com-

panies of light infantry; and there, for some reasons best known to himself, he took up a position. But it was very soon discovered, not only that the position was in every respect unfavourable; but that the subjugation of North Carolina was an effort beyond the means of our small army to accomplish. It would be impossible to convey to the mind of any, except one intimately acquainted with the history of those times, an adequate idea of the inconveniences to which we were here made subject. Surrounded on all sides by a population decidedly hostile, as well as threatened in front and on both flanks by considerable armed bodies, neither our foraging parties nor patrols could go abroad with safety; whilst our communications were continually interrupted both with Cambden and Charlestown, and all intercourse between us and our detached corps was broken off. It was to no purpose that Lord Cornwallis distributed his troops over as wide a surface of country as they could conveniently occupy. Little benefit resulted from the measure, whilst even the activity of Tarlton and his indefatigable legion failed of making us aware in sufficient time

of the enemy's intentions. From this cause it arose, that Major Ferguson, one of our most daring and active partisan leaders, suffered a total defeat at King's Mountain, the Major himself being killed in the contest, whilst Blair's Mill, Garden Hill, Polk's Mill, and Cambden itself, were successively threatened. Lord Cornwallis became alarmed, and not without reason, at these events. He resolved to fall back upon his depots; and sending a courier to recall the Legion from the other side of the Catawba, whither it had gone with a view to succour Ferguson, he gathered his baggage and stores together, and the retreat began.

We quitted Charlotte Town in tolerable order on the evening of the 14th of October, following the route which leads to Catawba Ford. The roads, owing to a heavy fall of rain, were extremely bad, the night pitchy dark, and the guides woefully ignorant; whilst of our waggons, very many were at once miserably horsed, and still more miserably directed. No fewer than five-and-twenty broke down about three hours after we quitted the town, the whole of which, being first plundered by the rear-guard,

were abandoned. This was bad enough, inasmuch as no inconsiderable portion of the private soldiers' baggage was sacrificed; but it was followed by other mishaps, even more distressing, because much more mortifying. We had scarcely gained the Catawba settlements, when the Commander-in-chief was taken ill, and all operations became in consequence suspended. Under any circumstances this would have been felt as a heavy calamity. Whatever his rank might be in these days when British Generals stand so high throughout Europe, he was, at the period of which I am now speaking, justly considered one of the ablest officers in the army; and he possessed the happy talent of impressing those about him, and under his command, with the fullest confidence in his judgment and courage. But in war, as in peace, misfortunes seldom come alone. Lord Cornwallis became sick at a moment when, more perhaps than at any other, celerity of movement was required; and the army halted in consequence some days in a district where neither provisions nor forage were to be procured.

Though naturally chagrined at these mal-

adventures, the troops kept up their spirits with wonderful alacrity; and they were rewarded for their patience by seeing the General so far restored as to enable them to recommence their march after the lapse of a few days. Sugar Creek was now crossed, Mecklenberg County traversed, and the Catawba passed, near Twelve Mile Creek, without opposition or difficulty. This done, we soon entered into the district of Fishing Creek, where we found stores of every description abundant; and finally, towards the end of the month, took post at a place called Wynnesborough. It was a very centrical, as well as convenient station, lying between the Broad River and the Wateree, from which an excellent watch could be kept over both Camb-den and Ninety Six; whilst its vicinity to the Dutch Forks, and a rich and flourishing country in the rear, promised ample supplies of flour, forage, and cattle. From this place, the sick, the number of which, late hardships had greatly increased, were removed under convoy to Camb-den; whilst large quantities of rum, ammu-nition, and stores, were brought up by the same convoy on its return.

Whilst the main army occupied this position, a brilliant and successful expedition was undertaken by the light troops, of which, as we chanced to bear a part in it, it may not be amiss if I offer some description. I stated some time ago, that the whole country round Charlotte Town was decidedly hostile to us, the male inhabitants everywhere abandoning their houses, and acting in Guerilla fashion upon our communications and small detachments. The example set here was soon followed in other quarters; and there suddenly started up, on every hand, corps of irregular Militia, at the head of whom, for the most part, were men of little military science, but great courage, and a good deal of enterprise. Two of these, on the present occasion, particularly harassed us. One Marrion, a private gentleman, who had voluntarily taken the oaths on our conquest of Charlestown, no sooner saw what he conceived to be a favourable opportunity for revolt, than he embraced it, and, assuming the command of all the disaffected in South Carolina, made frequent and annoying incursions into the friendly districts. Some-

what similar to him in his views and operations, though much more formidable, because more experienced and wary, was General Sumpter, an officer with whom our detached posts had already maintained numerous and severe actions. Lord Cornwallis resolved to strike at one, if not at both these persons. He placed under Tarlton's orders his own Legion, the 63rd regiment, with one company of Fraser's Highlanders; and leaving it to himself to regulate the details of the service, desired him only, in general terms, to clear the country of these marauders.

Colonel Tarlton's dispositions, for the purpose of surprising Marrion, were admirable in their kind, and deserved success. They failed, however, owing to the desertion of a soldier of the 63rd, who warned the enemy of his danger when we were within two miles of him; and Marrion, in consequence, by dispersing his followers, contrived to escape. It was not so with General Sumpter. That officer, encouraged by a slight success which he obtained over a detachment sent against him, whilst Tarlton was in pursuit of Marrion, passed the Broad River in force, and made such demonstrations as indicated his

design of attacking the detachment stationed at Ninety Six. Tarlton lost no time in following him. By a series of well-devised stratagems, he contrived to keep the enemy in the dark, not only as to his object, but as to his local position; and he crossed the river in pursuit of him, without permitting Sumpter to know that he had retired from the Wateree.

Every thing went on as could have been wished, till our little corps attained such a situation as must have brought us in one short march upon the enemy, when the same accident which enabled Marrion to escape, occurred again, greatly to our annoyance and disappointment. Another soldier of the 63rd deserted; and Sumpter, apprised of his danger, instantly retreated, though surpassing us as much in numbers, as in knowledge of the country. On this occasion, however, no dispersion took place; we were not, therefore, as formerly, placed at fault, for our enemy was still before us: and it depended upon ourselves whether he should escape or not. Seldom have men undergone severer fatigue than both our infantry and cavalry endured in this pursuit. From

sunrise till sunset we were in march; the night itself brought us no respite; we never so much as lay down, but absolutely slept upon our feet. But our exertions were not made in vain. About five o'clock in the afternoon of the 20th of November, one hundred and seventy cavalry, and eighty mounted infantry, all that from extreme fatigue could be kept together, received satisfactory proof that Sumpter's corps could not be very distant. Our little advanced guard fell in with a strong detachment, which it charged with great gallantry and perfect success; and the main body became soon after visible, drawn up in battle array, close to the river Tyger.

General Sumpter had posted his men with great judgment, and in such a manner as, had he retained his order, and waited for an attack, ought to have secured him the victory. His centre occupied a number of log-houses, placed on the ridge of an eminence, called Blacksmith's Hill; his right was extended along some rails which were flanked by a rugged mountain; and his left held a piece of broken and difficult ground, secured by a bend of the river. By this means, he completely covered the ford, the

great road to which led through his centre, and close to the very doors of the log-houses; whilst no inconsiderable portion of his own front was protected from insult by a branch of water running across it. Colonel Tarlton was not disposed to storm this formidable position with the small portion of his corps which had as yet come up. He accordingly commanded the infantry to alight, and to scatter themselves in defensive order in the woods; and even of the cavalry a portion only kept their saddles, the remainder dismounting, to rest their horses. But that which his inclination prompted him to shun, the movements of the enemy forced upon him; and within ten minutes of our arrival at our ground, we were warmly engaged.

The truth is, that General Sumpter, advertised of our weakness by a woman, who, on horseback, had watched our march from a hill that overhung the road, considered that his best chance of defeating us would be by attacking us in detail, rather than by waiting to be attacked by our whole force after it should be combined. He accordingly caused about four hundred men to advance, and to assail our infantry in front,

whilst a second party, of similar strength, should take the dragoons in flank. A tolerably warm tiraillade ensued; but our people no sooner brought their bayonets to the charging position, than the enemy gave way with a celerity which surprised, not less than it encouraged us. We pursued with great impetuosity, driving them before us to the very doors of the houses; but here so heavy a fire came upon us, that we suffered some loss, and for an instant or two were in danger of being repulsed. At this critical juncture, the cavalry, who had dispersed the column sent against them, charged at full speed up the road. The Americans, alarmed, as it would appear, at the thunder of the horses' hoofs, not only broke and fled from the open country, but, with unaccountable infatuation, abandoned their block-houses, and the rout became as general and as complete as can well be imagined. Three of the enemy's colonels fell in the action, General Sumpter himself was wounded, upwards of a hundred privates were killed, and fifty made prisoners. We continued the pursuit across the river till every part of the corps was dispersed and disorganized; after which we returned, by slow marches, to the vicinity of Broad River.

CHAPTER VI.

WHILST these operations were going on, and her husband, as a necessary consequence, constantly in the field, Helen Shaw was, with great difficulty, persuaded to take up her temporary residence at Cambden. Fain would she have followed Allen in all his wanderings, had he permitted her; but as he saw that her health was not equal to the fatigues to which such an attempt must expose her, he resolutely refused to sanction her making it. With a heavy heart she quitted the lines at Wynnesborough, the very morning when Allen set out to join Tarlton's Legion; and we saw no more of her from that period till the close of the campaign.

In the mean while strong reinforcements under the command of General Leslie arrived at

Charlestown. When these should join him, Lord Cornwallis calculated on being able to bring three thousand five hundred men into the field; and he made immediate preparations for a second and more decisive inroad into the heart of North Carolina. To this, indeed, he was invited, not more by the accession obtained to his own strength, than by the position and resources of the enemy, who, under General Green, were represented to be weak in numbers, and sadly in want of every thing. They were, moreover, understood to be so scattered and divided, as to be assailable, by a brisk movement, in detail. Thus, General Green himself, with one division, was in march towards the Pidee, with the design, as was supposed, of forming a junction with General Caswall, and giving jealousy to Cambden; whilst General Morgan, with a select body of light infantry, and Colonel Washington's regiment of cavalry, was stated to be moving upon Catawba and Broad rivers, that he might gather round him the militia of that district and threaten Ninety Six. Such was represented to be the state of the American army at the close of the year 1780;

and Lord Cornwallis was no sooner made aware of the approach of General Leslie's brigade, than he prepared to take advantage of it.

His earliest efforts were directed against General Morgan, whose proximity to Ninety Six, as well as his designs upon the country round it, rendered him an object of extreme jealousy. On the 1st of January, 1781, Colonel Tarlton was directed to cross the Broad River, with his own Legion, infantry and cavalry, five hundred strong; the first battalion 71st, two hundred; and two three pounders; and to push the American commander, if within his reach, to the utmost. Colonel Tarlton obeyed, but had not proceeded above twenty miles from Brierley's Ferry, when he ascertained beyond the possibility of doubt, that the report which caused his movement was erroneous, and that Ninety-Six was in no danger from Morgan, who had not captured, and probably never meant to approach it. He sent immediate intelligence to this effect, to Lord Cornwallis, giving him at the same time very accurate information of Morgan's position and strength; and he himself halted his detachment, till the General's sanction

should be obtained to certain plans which he took the liberty of proposing.

What these plans were, I do not pretend to know, but this I well remember, that after a halt of some days, we were joined by the 7th regiment of foot, and fifty dragoons of the 17th; which latter force escorted up from Brierley's Ferry the waggons containing our heavy baggage. On the morning after their arrival, our little column recommenced its march, passing, not without some hazard, the swollen waters of Indian and Dunken Creeks, and receiving at every step apparently well-grounded accounts of the increasing strength of General Morgan. This, as may be supposed, produced a good deal of communication by couriers and patrols, between our leader and the Commander-in-chief, but it can hardly be said to have delayed our movements for a moment. On the 12th, we turned to the westward in search of practicable roads over the Enmore and Tyger rivers; on the 13th, such fords were discovered; and on the 14th, the rivers themselves were passed, at a spot somewhat above the Cherokee road. Here intelligence came in, that Morgan guarded

in great strength all the fords upon the Pacolet, which, in accordance with the general plan of the campaign, it was our business to seize; and as Lord Cornwallis's column was understood to be in prosperous progress up the eastern bank of the Broad River, Tarlton lost no time in preparing to execute the manœuvre. I need scarcely mention that the operation, if successful, promised to produce the happiest results. General Morgan, driven from the Pacolet, could fall back only upon the Broad River; and as the whole extent of that stream was in possession of the British army, his capture or destruction would be unavoidable.

The whole of the 15th was spent by the main body in quiet, numerous patrols and reconnoitring parties being sent out with a view of ascertaining exactly the dispositions which Morgan had made. Of these by far the greater proportion failed in effecting any discovery at all advantageous to us; but one detachment succeeded, after infinite trouble, in discovering a ford upon which no guard was placed, and Colonel Tarlton was instantly made aware of the circumstance. The Colonel promptly and

judiciously acted upon the intelligence. He formed his little band into line of march about an hour before sun-set, and took the road which leads up the river towards the iron-works,—thus creating a persuasion on the part of the country people that he designed to possess himself of the foundry; but in the morning his course was suddenly changed, and his light troops were pushed towards the Pacolet. They gained the stream unobserved; seized a ford about six miles distant from the enemy's camp, and kept it without meeting with any molestation till the main body arrived. After this the passage was easy, and we formed before noon on the 16th, on the same bank of the river with General Morgan.

There stood about half way between our present encampment and the American position, a sort of hamlet of log-houses, which the brave but unfortunate Major Ferguson had constructed some time back, when acting in this district. Of these our leader determined to take possession; and that he might not be anticipated by the enemy, to whom they were not less important than himself, he pushed forward his cavalry and

light infantry forthwith towards them. The detachment succeeded in its design fully, and Tarlton followed as fast as fatigue would allow, with the intention of posting his whole corps under their cover, and watching the proceedings of his opponent. But his patrols having discovered that the enemy were decamped, that plan was laid aside, and the light troops were again advanced as far as the ground from which Morgan had retired. This we promptly occupied; and here in the midst of plenty, the Americans having abandoned their very provisions in a half-cooked state, we spent an extremely comfortable night.

In the mean while numerous bands of well affected natives, as well as strong patrols of dragoons, were directed to feel their way on all sides, and to ascertain with as much accuracy as might be, the route which General Morgan had taken. These were not negligent in the discharge of their important duty, and long before midnight word was brought that the enemy had struck into certain by-ways which led to Thickelle Creek. Soon after this, a prisoner was conducted to the camp, who represented himself as being a Mi-

litia Colonel, and to have fallen into the hands of our people when accidentally straggling from Morgan's line of march. This man fully confirmed the previous reports of our emissaries. He stated that Morgan designed to keep the Broad River on his right, till he should have wearied us out in pursuing him, or drawn us far from our supplies, and beyond the reach of assistance; and that then, and not till then, it was his intention to give us battle, with a corps which every day became stronger and stronger. Finally he assured us, that a formidable force of Mountaineers from the Green River were on their march to join Morgan, and that the junction might be expected to take place within a few days at farthest.

Such information as this, coming from such a quarter, was not to be slighted. The troops having enjoyed some hours of sound and refreshing sleep, were, at three o'clock in the morning of the 17th, ordered to fall in, and the pickets being withdrawn, immediate preparations were made to follow the steps of the enemy. That this might be done without check or hindrance, the baggage and waggons

were directed to remain on the ground, under the protection of a guard taken from every regiment; and the officer in command was particularly enjoined not to think of moving till the sun should have risen. With respect, again, to the column, it began its journey in high order and excellent spirits. Three companies of light infantry, supported by the infantry of the Legion, formed the advance; the 7th regiment, the guns, and the first battalion of the 71st, composed the centre; and the cavalry and mounted infantry brought up the rear. But the ground over which the Americans had passed was ill adapted for celerity of progress. It was rugged, broken, and uneven, continually intersected by creeks and swamps; and the night being extremely dark, and a necessity existing to examine both flanks and front carefully, our march was, for a time, exceedingly slow. The dawn was beginning to appear, ere we gained the bank of Thickelle Creek; and we can scarcely be said to have crossed it ere day broke. From that time forward, however, our advance was both more brisk and more animating. Two troops of dragoons taking the lead, pressed on at

a smart trot for the purpose of harassing the enemy's rear; the light infantry followed, as fast as prudence and their strength would allow; and the column itself moved at a pace as rapid as was in any degree consistent with solidity and order.

The march had not continued thus above an hour and a half, when the officer in command of the advanced guard reported that the enemy were halted and forming. We were accompanied on this occasion by several loyal inhabitants, who professing, and I believe truly, to be acquainted with every foot of the surrounding country, acted neither as soldiers nor camp followers, but as guides. These men being consulted gave a clear and accurate description of the ground which General Morgan occupied. They stated that the woods were open and free, offering no peculiar advantages to a force destined to hold them; that the Broad River was about six miles distant from the enemy's left, at the place where King's Creek joined it; and that by making a curve to the westward, it afterwards ran in a direction parallel with their rear. All this was exceedingly satisfactory. It showed that, could we but overthrow

them here, the great end of our expedition would be attained, the Broad River being, as we had good reason to believe, in possession of Lord Cornwallis; and as there seemed to be nothing very formidable in the enemy's position, our leader made no hesitation about assailing it.

As a preparatory step to the intended battle, the dragoons of the Legion were ordered to drive in several straggling parties of Militia, which covered the enemy's front, and concealed the details of his arrangements. This was done with much promptitude, when the Americans were discovered arranged in two accurate lines, along the face and upon the summit of a gentle eminence. An open pine wood was round them, capable, no doubt, of sheltering them in a slight degree from fire, but not sufficiently thick either to screen their movements, or embarrass ours; and their flanks depended for support entirely upon the courage and constancy of the individuals who held them. As to their numbers, it is not very easy to speak with confidence. The front line, which consisted entirely of Militia, occupied a considerable space, and probably fell little if at all short of a thousand men; the second line, which stood four hundred paces in rear, was com-

posed of five hundred Regulars, three hundred back-woodsmen, and one hundred and twenty dragoons. Of the latter fact, I believe, there is no doubt, the returns of the strength of these corps having been afterwards inspected by our people.

It has never yet been accurately explained, why Colonel Tarlton failed to allow his troops, harassed by a long and laborious march through a difficult country, a few minutes' rest previous to the commencement of the battle. From the enemy's dispositions it was easy to gather—first, that he had no intention of prosecuting his retreat, and secondly, that he had made up his mind to receive, not to give the attack; no detriment could have, therefore, arisen from the delay of even a single hour. But Tarlton had succeeded so often in such encounters, that he began to look upon himself as invincible; and to conceive that the very terror of his name must carry all before it. In full accordance with this disposition, he had no sooner obtained a survey of the American corps, than he directed his own to form for the attack. The light infantry moved to the right, extending their files very loosely, till they became equal to the American front; the Legion infantry de-

ployed upon the left, in similar order, whilst the 7th drew up in dense array, placing itself upon the extreme left of the whole. Of the guns, one was planted in the centre of the Legion, the other, with the right wing of the 7th; and two troops of cavalry, each fifty strong, at once secured our own flanks, and threatened those of the enemy. The 71st again, was placed about a hundred and fifty paces in rear; and with the remainder of the dragoons, amounting to nearly two hundred men, formed the reserve.

This order was hardly assumed, when the troops, having been previously directed to throw off their knapsacks, advanced. Our men, as I need not tell you, were all jaded to the last degree; yet they moved forward with much alacrity, cheering as they went, and passed a space of full five hundred yards in width, at double-quick time. Not a shot had yet been fired, except a few random discharges from certain recruits belonging to the 7th, which, however, were promptly suppressed as useless; and we were already within fifty yards of the American line, which, with admirable steadiness, waited to receive us. At that moment they

opened their fire; and never, in the course of my whole military life have I witnessed a more destructive one. Whether it was that the palpable exhaustion of our troops encouraged them, or whether their Militia had acquired, from long service, the coolness of veterans, I cannot tell; but they gave their volley with such effect, as to cause our entire front line to recoil. They recovered, however, in a moment, and returned it, when the woods far and near rang to the thunder of musketry.

Things had continued in this state about a quarter of an hour, our troops making little or no progress, when Colonel Tarlton launched his cavalry against the American line, and for an instant shook it. Washington's dragoons seeing this, rode boldly forward; and after a brief but severe struggle, our troopers gave ground. Now then it became our turn to act. "Forward, Highlanders!" exclaimed Tarlton, waving his sword; and forward we sprang with the impetuosity which distinguishes our countrymen. It was an overwhelming, but a fatal charge. The American Militia gave way immediately; they did not so much as wait to receive our fire, or look

upon our steel, but they retreated in a dense body, and were beautifully covered by their reserve. That corps which had not yet come into play, wheeling back to the right and left, presented an open space for the fugitives to flee through, and then closed up again with the coolness and precision of men manœuvring on a parade. I need not tell you, that a charge is never made, a regiment never gives the rush, nor brings its muskets to the trail, without some confusion occurring; and if the race be kept up over a very broad space, the line becomes unavoidably confused and irregular. Such was our position on this day. The Militia being swept away, no efforts on the part of the officers could restrain the men from pushing forward upon the reserve, and that without a moment's pause to close their files, or even to recover their breath. The consequences were such as might have been anticipated. As we passed our own front line, which by some inexplicable fatality lagged behind, and ran furiously and heedlessly forward, we found ourselves unsupported and breathless within forty yards of the American regulars; and our reception was of a nature not exactly

calculated to restore us to our wonted coolness, or original order.

I should act unjustly towards the American officer who commanded Morgan's reserve on that day, did I fail to mention him by name as well as record his proceedings. Colonel Howard (a man not unworthy of his honoured name) permitted us, as I have just stated, to approach within forty yards of him, ere he gave the word to fire. That word was, however, given at last, and the very first volley levelled with the earth one half of our battalion. Brave as our men were, and quite unaccustomed to repulse, you will not be surprised to learn, that a slaughter so tremendous, as well as so sudden, completely checked them. Instead of rushing on, a measure to which, indeed, their scattered array was ill adapted, they halted, and fired, casting an anxious look back, from time to time, for the support which ought to have followed them: but it never came. A panic the most unaccountable had fallen upon troops, which till now never fought but to conquer. They stood rooted to the ground where our battalion passed them, and

left us to maintain as we best could, an action with the entire force of Morgan's corps.

A strife so unequal could not in the nature of things be of long continuance. The American Militia, animated by the example of the Regulars, once more resumed their place in the line. They plied us with volley after volley, to which our feeble tiraillade could offer no effectual opposition; and finally, their cavalry wheeling round the flank of the backwoodsmen, broke in upon us with the noise of thunder. Now then, at last, our people gave way. Scattered, broken, disheartened, more than half of our comrades slain, and not a few of the survivors wounded, what could we do against such a charge? We fairly fled; and our example being followed by the other regiments, a scene of the most irremediable confusion followed. It was in vain that Colonel Tarlton flew back to his reserve of cavalry, and used every exertion to lead them on. They, like the infantry, were panic-struck; and without firing a carabine or drawing a sabre, they turned their horses' heads and galloped from the field. What followed beggars all attempt at descrip-

tion. Parties fled, formed, faced about, resisted, only to be cut down from behind, or ridden over, till the whole face of the country became covered with fugitives and pursuers, and the ground was spotted with the dead and dying.

In the midst of this tumult the two friends bore themselves, as they had ever done, with the most exemplary courage and coolness. By the first discharge of Howard's Regulars Allen Roy had received a wound; but as it was not a severe one, he kept his place, and fought to the last. In like manner, when the rout became general, the comrades kept closely together, and a sergeant of their company drawing about him others besides themselves into a circle, they made a bold effort to retreat in order. At this moment, the enemy, who had seized our cannon, turned one of them, loaded with grape, upon the gallant band. It was fired, and shrieks loud and fearful abundantly testified that it had not been laid inaccurately. But there arose one among these, not of bodily suffering, which more than all the rest thrilled to the hearts of such as heard it. It came

from Allen Roy, and it was the melancholy signal that his beloved friend was no more. That dreadful discharge had taken effect upon Allen Dhu, who had hitherto escaped unhurt; and he now lay stark, bloody, and lifeless, at the feet of his countryman.

Not all the efforts of those about him could prevail upon Allen Roy to quit the body. With the fury of a madman he placed himself astride it, and seeing a squadron of horse in full charge towards him, stood to receive them. "Revenge, revenge!" was the only word he uttered. They came on, and one fell dead, pierced by a ball from his musket. The rest closed about him: he stabbed the horse of the first with his bayonet, which reared up and threw its rider; but before he could recover his weapon a second struck at him, and severed the thumb and fore-finger from his right hand. Even now, though his musket fell to the earth, he seemed to defy his fate; but the American, seeing his defenceless state, arrested a second blow, and riding on left him. The next moment he was grasped by two of his comrades, who risked their own lives to preserve his; and

in spite of struggles, as violent as the loss of blood would permit him to exert, he was hurried from the field.

What remains to be told of this disastrous affair, a few words will suffice to describe. Never was dispersion more absolute than that which followed our defeat. A few dragoons only kept with Colonel Tarlton, and retreated as far as Hamilton's Ford, where they halted, to enable such fugitives as might escape to rally, whilst the rest plunged at random into the woods and fastnesses, anxious only to escape immediate destruction. The enemy, however, were not so imprudent as to waste much time in pursuit. Having contented themselves with the capture of all our baggage, which unfortunately came up just as the battle ended, they called in their detachments, and continued their march, effectually escaping the danger by which they had been menaced, and reaching the Catawba in good order. By this means our stragglers, after a day or two of severe suffering, were enabled gradually to draw to a head, and rejoin their leader; and the wounded were sent back, under proper escort, to the grand depot at Cambden.

CHAPTER VII.

I WILL not so much as attempt a description of the scene which followed, when poor Helen Shaw was made acquainted with the fate of her husband. Let it suffice to state, that things fell out exactly as might have been anticipated; and that though the utmost care was taken to convey the fatal intelligence slowly and by degrees, the shock at last was an awful one. Fainting-fit succeeded fainting-fit during many hours, insomuch that those about her expected that each would be her last; and when these ceased, a frenzy took possession of her brain, which soon brought on a violent fever. For three weeks Helen lay upon a sick bed, ignorant of things past as well as present. All was

to her a cold cheerless blank; for reason ceased to act, and she was a maniac.

But Helen's constitution, though not perhaps robust. was as good as usually falls to the lot of women in her station. Health gradually came back, bringing in its train what is more important than health, the use of her reasoning faculties; and she found herself condemned to survive every thing that she valued, with a full and perfect consciousness of her situation. And sad and dreary was that situation; and gloomy and cheerless every prospect which the future held out. Deprived of the single being in whom all her affections centred; alone among a crowd of strangers, in a land far removed from the place of her nativity, and pennyless as well as desolate, it is no wonder if poor Helen occasionally looked upon herself as forsaken of Heaven. Oh! could she but discover where her Allen lay!—it was the only boon which she would ask even of her God; for then she could go and watch beside his grave, till her heart broke, and she was at rest. But even of that poor consolation she was deprived; for he was left like the rest, to be buried by chance pas-

sengers—or, it might be, to become the prey of wild beasts from the forests.

In the midst of this passion of grief, a ray of comfort, feeble indeed, but still to one in her condition valuable, shot in upon her, when it was announced that Allen Roy stood without desirous to see her. That poor fellow, though himself suffering dreadfully, as well from his wounds as from the loss of his friend, had, day by day, called to inquire how the unhappy widow fared, whilst, with an excess of delicacy, of which none but a Highlander could be capable, he had not hitherto asked permission to see her. Now, however, having been discharged from the army, as no longer capable of active service, and hearing that a vessel would shortly sail for England, in which a passage could be procured both for himself and Helen, he came to ascertain whether she was willing to put herself under his protection, to be conveyed back to her relatives in Glasgow. The meeting of these two persons was one which the most selfish and hard-hearted of human beings could not have beheld without emotion. Hitherto she had been too much absorbed with sorrow to

remember that one faithful friend was still left to her; and now that the fact was forced upon her recollection, it produced a strong but not a distressing effect. She buried her face in her apron, holding out her hand to him in silence; and they both, as the Bible beautifully expresses it, "lifted up their voice and wept."

When they had in some degree recovered their composure, Allen proceeded, with all the tenderness of which he was capable, to open to her his plan as to her future proceedings. Avoiding all reference to her deceased husband, as well as every expression calculated to recall to mind the absolute destitution of her state, he spoke only of Glasgow and her father, and strove, with as much good sense as correct feeling, to stir up a longing for home, which might induce her to propose, of her own accord, to return thither. She listened to him for some time, without appearing either to comprehend his design, or to experience the feelings which he was anxious to excite; but by degrees this obtusity of grief gave way, and flashes of long-forgotten sentiments broke forth. There is no period of our lives at which the remembrance of

the scenes amidst which childhood has been spent, comes upon us with greater force than when we are afflicted. Happiness is a selfish and an ingrossing state of existence; it leaves no room in the mind for other thoughts, besides such as bear immediately upon the present; but by sorrow all our earlier and holier associations are renewed, and we look back to our first home, as if its very atmosphere possessed the power of healing. So was it with Helen on this occasion. Being cautiously and prudently led to think and speak of her father and the days of her youth, the desire to return among them easily and naturally followed; and she made Allen happy by expressing a strong disposition to seek shelter under the roof where she was born.

"What is there now to keep me here?" said she. "For you, Allen, I entertain, and ever shall entertain, the love and friendship of a sister; but he who possessed all my heart is no more, and why should I continue in a country, which I visited only that I might not be separated from him? Oh, no, no. I will return to my father's house; heart-broken and desolate

though I be, he will bid me welcome; and if consolation is to be found any where upon earth, there I may surely look for it."

Allen warmly approved of her resolution; but he judged it prudent not to pursue the subject farther then. It was evident, from her manner of expressing herself, that she was ignorant of his intention of becoming her fellow-voyager; and Allen was fearful, lest the announcement might, if hastily made, operate unfavourably. He accordingly quitted her, after giving his promise to make inquiries as to the best means of gratifying her wishes; and he even determined, in case she should discover any reluctance to intrust herself to him, not to propose the arrangement. There was more of true delicacy here than might have been expected from a man in Allen's situation; he felt that she might attribute his anxiety on her account to an unworthy motive, and he would not incur that hazard for any reward which could have been offered.

It so happened that the vessel in which Allen had hoped to take a passage to England, received at this time a counter-order, and instead

of proceeding home, was directed to convey invalids to New York. This was mortifying, not only because it would retard his own return to Glencoe, an event to which, as was natural, he now looked forward with eagerness, but because he much doubted whether Helen would consent to follow so circuitous a route, for the mere purpose of securing his protection. The moment was however a pressing one. Already had the route been issued, and he was to march in two days for Charlestown, where the transport lay; there was therefore no time to pursue the line of strict propriety to which he had hitherto confined himself. He hurried off to Helen's quarters, and laid before her, not without some embarrassment, the true state of the case.

"Believe me, Helen," said he, "that in proposing that you shall accompany me to New York, and from thence to England, I am guided only by a regard to your own comfort; and if I be mistaken in supposing that you are likely to be more at ease beside me than among strangers, I will never think of the thing again. But you have long called me your brother; you called

me so only the other day, and I should ill act the part of one, if I did not offer myself as your protector."

"I understand you, Allen," replied Helen, whilst the tears chased each other over her cheeks; "and I value, as it deserves, the extreme delicacy of your attentions. To convince you of this, I freely and contentedly place myself under your care. You are incapable, I well know, of speaking to the widow of your friend in other language than her situation demands, and therefore I give myself up entirely to your guidance."

Allen, as may be supposed, assured her that she should never find cause to repent of her confidence; and he faithfully and strictly kept his word.

Neither the journey of the friends, from Cambden to Charlestown, nor the subsequent voyage from Charlestown to New York, were productive of any event sufficiently interesting to deserve repetition. They carried with them the respect and esteem of all who had formerly known them; and Helen was not permitted to quit the regiment without some substantial

proof of the regard in which she was held. A handsome subscription was raised for her, to which every man and officer gave something; and she departed, sorrowful, but not despairing, because supported by the answer of a good conscience. In New York, again, where by a succession of untoward accidents they were detained during many months, the time passed as heavily as it might be expected to pass, among entire strangers; but they clung to one another as companions in affliction always do, and bore the pain of hope delayed with exemplary patience. It would have been unnatural had such close and constant intercourse failed to lead to a result, which, when it began, neither the one nor the other anticipated. Though Allen forgot not his promise for an instant, and carefully avoided every thing like a declaration of love, his manner gradually assumed an air of increased and increaing tenderness, till Helen could no longer disguise from herself the truth, or refuse to reason with herself upon it.

It was on a bright autumnal evening, just twelve months after the fatal affair of Cowpens, that Allen Roy and Helen Shaw wandered

forth upon the ramparts of New York. They took the direction, which had ever been their favourite, towards the water battery, from which an extensive and magnificent sea view could be obtained; and they sat down, as they had often done before, to gaze on the expanse of waters, and talk sometimes of Allen Dhu, sometimes of home. There was a perfect stillness around them, unbroken except by the ripple of the waves upon the beach; for the air was calm, the bustle of the town was remote, and not so much as a solitary sentinel kept post here. For a time their conversation continued as it had begun; they spoke much of their projected voyage, and of the reception which Helen was likely to meet at its close; but by degrees other topics were introduced, no less interesting at least to one, if not to both the speakers. Still there was no mention made either of love or marriage; these were matters to which Allen Roy had pledged himself never to allude;—but the probability of parting for ever within so brief a space of time, was not left unnoticed, and its notice called forth expressions, on his part, of the deepest and bit-

terest regret. Helen sat silent for some moments. Her colour went and came; she evidently laboured under violent excitement; but she either did not hear, or paid no attention to her companion's declarations. At last she turned round, and looking at him with a glance, calm, collected and fixed, she said—

"Allen Roy, you have kept your promise like a man of honour, and I thank you for having done so,—yet you cannot suppose that I misunderstand the purport of these allusions. You love me, Allen; you have long loved me, and you would wed me, did I consent."

"Oh, Helen," exclaimed he, "why wring from me a confession which I had vowed never to make? Love thee! Nay, do I not worship thee? Art thou not the very object of my adoration, that comes between me and heaven itself? Helen, I live but in thy presence; and when we part, I shall not long survive thee."

"I knew as much," replied she. "Now listen to me: I do not love you, Allen—I have never loved but one, and he"—here her voice faltered for a moment, but struggling violently, she recovered herself—"and he is in his grave.

With him are buried all that this heart ever has known, or ever can know of womanly affection. But if a regard the most sincere, and a friendship the purest and most sisterly will suffice, take them; and with them take this poor hand."

She held out her hand to him as she spoke. "How shall I ever sufficiently thank you for this, Helen?" exclaimed he, seizing the proffered hand, and covering it with kisses: "I know that to be loved as Allen Dhu was, is something to which I cannot look; but if you will commit to me this hand, and with it all that you possess the power to give, oh, Helen, you will make me the happiest of men."

"I have done so already," said she: "I am yours from this hour; and now let us be going."

She rose as she uttered this declaration, and putting her arm through that of Allen Roy, walked calmly back to the town. No farther expressions of rapture escaped him, nor did she so much as once again recur to the subject; indeed, had a stranger overheard them, he would have been at a loss to surmise that an affianced couple were together. But though, in delicacy to her, Allen suppressed his joy, he was

not therefore the less a happy man. He bade her good-night at the door of her lodgings, then only for the first time venturing to ask on what day she would be his; and having received such an answer as his most sanguine desires would have suggested, he bounded off to his own apartment.

The preliminaries which go before the marriage of a poor discharged soldier, are seldom very important, or very tedious. Allen soon put his trifling affairs in order, and within a short week after their walk on the water battery, Allen Roy and Helen Shaw were united. This change in her circumstances produced, as it was just that it should, a change in Helen's plans for her future guidance. Instead of retiring to Glasgow, and spending the remainder of her days under her father's roof, she readily consented to accompany her husband to Glencoe; and that resolution she soon after carried into effect, merely visiting her parent whilst passing through her native town. Nor had she any cause to repent of her choice. Allen hired a neat cottage at the gorge of the glen, not far from the point where the Coe falls into Loch

Leven; and there, with his own industry, and his pension of a shilling a-day, he supported her very comfortably. To complete her sources of thankfulness, Helen had been married little more than a year, when she gave birth to a child; and she owned that though Providence had tried her severely, it had not deserted her.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was on a summer's evening, about fifteen months after their arrival in the glen, that, the toil of the day being over, Allen Roy and Helen Shaw sat together upon a stone bench at their cottage door. Her babe lay sleeping upon Helen's lap, who listened to her husband's well-told legends—of the cruel massacre that occurred there under King William, and the numerous and severe persecutions which his ancestors had undergone, in consequence of their loyalty to the house of Stuart. He pointed out to her the spot where the aged Mackian was butchered, when clinging to the knees of Campbell of Glenlyon; he showed her the blackened spots on the hill side, where shielings had been burned with their inmates; and di-

rected her notice to the island where, under a scanty crust of soil, the victims of that act of execrable policy lay at rest. Poor Helen shuddered at such recitals, and was considering how she might most readily direct the conversation into another channel, when both Allen's attention and her's was attracted to an object not then very common in those parts. A solitary traveller made his appearance, slowly winding down the glen. He seemed to walk feebly and with labour, as if the weight either of years or of sickness was on him; and he paused from time to time to look round, in manifest admiration of the rugged grandeur of the scenery. Both Allen Roy and Helen had lost nothing of the kindness of heart which adhered to them even amidst the hardening scenes of active warfare. They felt for the stranger, for such he appeared to be, and determined to succour him; indeed they only waited till he should approach them more nearly, to make an offer of such accommodation as their cabin afforded.

They were not condemned to endure any very lengthened suspense, as to the wanderer's object and designs; he drew gradually to-

wards them, exhibiting on a near inspection manifest symptoms that he had been in his day the sport of no common misfortunes. His form, which, had he held himself upright, would have been commanding, was bent nearly double; though more, as it seemed, from toil or sickness than from age. A long beard, slightly grizzled, covered his upper lip and chin; his coat was made of grey cotton cloth, cut short like a frock, and patched in many places; a pair of leather mocassins protected his feet and legs, and a straw hat, tied round with a black ribbon, covered his head. On his back he carried a sort of bag or wallet, such as Scottish mendicants use to contain meal,—and he supported his tottering steps with a staff. Allen Roy advanced to meet him. "You seem tired and ill, friend," said he: "come in, and take a blessing at our hands."

"I thank you," said the stranger in a low tone, "but I cannot rest anywhere till I have found the objects of my search. If you can direct me to the abode of Allen Roy, you will enable me to perform a promise which I made to one most dear to him."

Both Allen and Helen started when the stranger began to speak. The latter, in particular, rose from her seat, and looked at the speaker with an earnestness, of which she was probably not conscious; but the glance seemed to satisfy her scruples, of whatever nature they might be, and she immediately resumed her seat.

"You could not have put that question to any one better able to answer it," replied Allen. "I am the man you seek;—enter, and when you have eaten and drunk, deliver yourself of your commission."

"I can again only thank you," said the stranger; "but my vow binds me neither to break bread nor drink water in the presence of Allen Roy, till I have told him all that I know."

"Be it so, friend!" answered Allen gaily. "Your's seems to be a strange engagement; but it is no business of mine to lead you into a violation of it. Sit down here between my wife and me, and tell us all that is to be told."

The stranger obeyed slowly, it almost appeared reluctantly,—without a doubt, painfully.

He did sit down however, and looking first upon the one, and then upon the other, began.

" I am, as my dress has probably led you to believe, a traveller from a far country. Nearly six months have elapsed since I quitted the Alleghany Mountains, on the borders of South Carolina; and I have traversed many lands, and crossed the wide sea, on purpose to converse, as I now do, with you. You have, I doubt not, heard before of one Allen Macdonald, a soldier of Fraser's Highlanders, commonly called Allen Dhu."

" Heard of him!" shrieked his auditors in a breath. " He was the friend of my bosom," said Allen.—" He was the husband of my love," exclaimed Helen. " Oh, if you have aught to say of him, speak on, and I will listen till day give place to night, and night to day again."

" Your friend!—your husband!" ejaculated the stranger. " Are not you man and wife? Is not that babe your child?"

" Yes, yes!" answered Helen, shuddering she scarce knew why. " We are indeed husband and wife; and kind and generous has Allen

been to me in my widowhood. But he knew when I gave him my hand, that my heart was in Allen Dhu's grave; and there it will continue till that grave give up its dead."

The stranger paused for a few moments, during which his dark expressive eye spoke volumes. By degrees, however, he suppressed his agitation, and taking up his story at the point where he had been interrupted, went on.

"Well, well! that is no business of mine. You must know that for many years back I have inhabited a solitary cottage, not far from the springs of the Pacolet. Why I abandoned society as I did in my early youth, it boots not to tell; perhaps I should have done wisely had I not permitted a weak feeling to drag me from my solitude even now. Well, it happened on a certain occasion, some two or three years ago, that the sound of war and the tumult of battle disturbed me. Men, I found, not satisfied to work each other lesser evils, could not abide to leave the extinction of life to nature; but must needs destroy one another with fire and sword, they knew not why, and they cared not wherefore. I think it was about the 17th or 18th

of January, 1781, that two hostile armies met at no great distance from my dwelling, and a severe and bloody action was fought at a place called Cowpens. As long as the fighting continued, I went not near the savages; I knew that I could not stay their murderous hands, and as to taking part with one side or the other, that my principles prohibited. But on the following day, when all was quiet; when the British had fled in confusion, and the Americans withdrawn in good order, I wandered forth to take a survey of the consequences of their meeting. Many humiliating sights met me there—men headless, mutilated, bloody, and cold; but I discovered one object which more than all the rest interested me, and I approached it. It was a wounded man, lying among a heap of slain, with his head resting upon the body of a dead horse, whose miseries, but for my arrival, must have been in a few minutes terminated. I raised him with difficulty in my arms; I bore him to my dwelling, and dressed his hurts with such simples as the country afforded, and tended him with a brother's care."

"What sort of man was he?" exclaimed

Allen. "Speak! was he tall, dark, handsome? Was there an American dragoon near the spot where he lay?"

"You have accurately described both the appearance of my patient and the objects that surrounded him."

"And did he recover?"

"He did."

"And his name"——

"Was Allen Dhu."

"Oh, what do I hear!" ejaculated Helen;—but, before she could utter another word, the stranger laid his hand on her arm, and as if there had been magic in the touch, she became silent.

"Hear me out," continued he, "and then act as you see proper. The stranger recovered. He told me who he was; that he possessed a wife whom he loved, God alone knew how tenderly,—and a friend, who never wronged him and was incapable of wronging him. To these he would have flown long ago; but his wounds having disabled him, he was incapable of motion, and I undertook to find them out, and convey them to him. Can I fulfil my engagement?"

"Yes, yes, instantly," exclaimed Helen, starting from her seat, and taking her babe in

her arms. "I will follow you, strange man, over the world, if you will but lead me to Allen. Where is he? where is my husband?"

"Helen," said the stranger, "he is here." As he spoke, he cast aside his staff, assumed his upright carriage, pulled off the artificial beard, and stood before them.

"God! what do I behold?" shrieked Helen. "My own Allen restored to me from the grave!"

"No, Helen," replied Allen Dhu, "you are now the property of another; and bitterly as I feel the blow, rest assured that I blame you not for inflicting it. Allen, my friend now as ever, you have been the protector of that woman when she most needed it. You have acted towards her as you ever did, nobly, generously. As to me, I have seen you once more, and I am satisfied."

"No, no, Allen Dhu," shrieked Helen wildly; "you shall not leave me again. You, you only have I loved; you do I still love; with you alone can life be valuable." She paused here for a moment, then passionately kissed the infant—

"There, Allen Roy," said she calmly, at the same time placing the child in his embrace, "take your child, and be kind to it for

its mother's sake. And now, my own Allen, I am yours once more, and for ever."

She threw herself into the arms of Allen Dhu, who pressed her to his bosom. "It is enough," said he: "Helen has made her choice, and we, Allen, may not thwart her. Come then, my love, pure and chaste to me as ever. But here we cannot remain.—Allen Roy, farewell! we meet again no more on this side of the grave."

Allen Roy did not refuse the proffered hand. He squeezed it fervently, but uttered not a word; and he stood, with the infant in his arms, motionless as a statue, whilst they slowly disappeared. From that time forth, the history of Allen Dhu and Helen Shaw is a blank; they quitted the Glen, and their course was never traced. As to Allen Roy, he lingered till his son attained to manhood, and then died, as most people believed, of a broken heart.

THE preceding tale was the last to which I listened at the hospitable board of the Chelsea Pensioners. It was in vain that Major Cohorn

called in to his assistance the majority of those with whom I had become so strangely intimate. This time I was deaf to their entreaties; and having faithfully promised to revisit them whenever a favourable opportunity should occur, I next morning resumed my journey.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 135, line 5, *for* 'these,' *read* 'whose.'
189, 9, *read* 'to prevent his.'

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

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